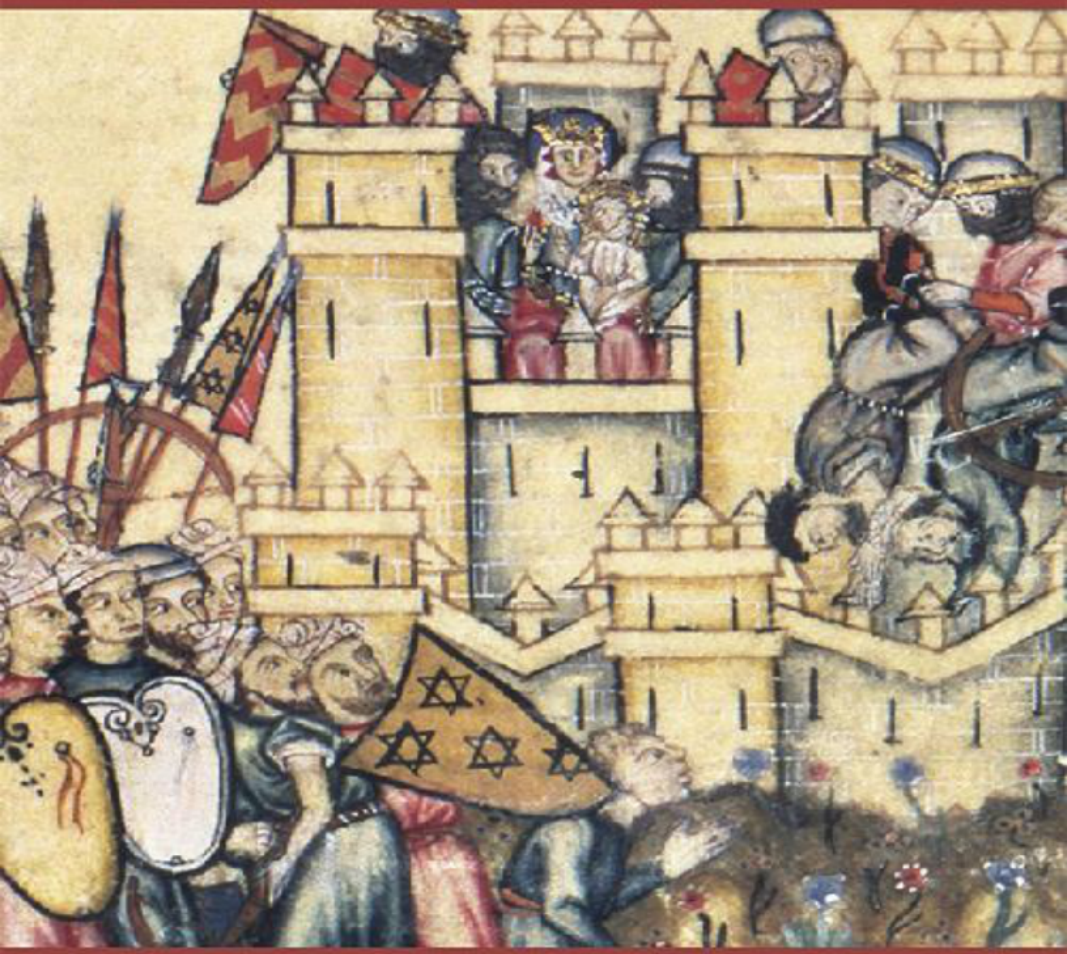
War in the Iberian Peninsula, 700–1600

Francisco García Fitz
João Gouveia Monteiro

VISIT...

Themes in Medieval and Early Modern History



WAR IN THE IBERIAN PENINSULA, 700-1600

EDITED BY FRANCISCO GARCÍA FITZ AND JOÃO GOUVEIA MONTEIRO

ROUTLEDGE

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ROUTLEDGE

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War in the Iberian Peninsula, 700–1600 is a panoramic synthesis of the Iberian Peninsula including the kingdoms of Leon and Castile, Aragon, Portugal, Navarre, al-Andalus and Granada. It offers an extensive chronology, covering the entire medieval period and extending through to the 16th century, allowing for a very broad perspective of Iberian history which displays the fixed and variable aspects of war over time.

The book is divided kingdom by kingdom to provide students and academics with a better understanding of the military interconnections across medieval and early modern Iberia.

The continuities and transformations within Iberian military history are showcased in the majority of chapters through markers to different periods and phases, particularly between the Early and High Middle Ages, and the Late Middle Ages.

With a global outlook, coverage of all the most representative military campaigns, sieges and battles between 700 and 1600, and a wide selection of maps and images, *War in the Iberian Peninsula* is ideal for students and academics of military and Iberian history.

Francisco García Fitz is Professor at the University of Extremadura, Spain. Expert in Medieval History, his research has addressed the military history and more specifically the policies and warlike relations between Christians and Muslims in medieval Spain.

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Themes in Medieval and Early Modern History

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Edited by Francisco García Fitz and João Gouveia Monteiro

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Preface

Over the last three decades, historiography on medieval war has grown rapidly in Spain and Portugal, experiencing a methodological renewal which has helped to produce a body of first rate studies on the topic. In universities and other research centres dozens of master and doctoral theses have been submitted, various research projects have been carried out, a large number of conferences and seminars have been organized, and hundreds of academic papers and monographs have been published on specific topics, as well as some collective works summarizing Portuguese and Spanish military history.

Institutions such as the Comissão Portuguesa de História Militar, founded in 1989, or the Instituto de Historia y Cultura Militar in Spain, created in 1997, have systematically organized conferences, awarded research prizes, edited specialized journals and published books on the subject. But it has been in Portuguese and Spanish universities that research on the military history of the Iberian Middle Ages has been more intensely developed and has benefited from institutional support. Even though in the late 1960s Miguel Ángel Ladero Quesada had already published some pioneering work on the Granada War (Ladero 1967–1969), it was not until the 1990s that doctoral theses and other research material began to be produced and published in a more consistent and continuous fashion.

All the Iberian medieval kingdoms have been thoroughly covered: in terms of the kingdom of Castile and Leon, the studies of Francisco García Fitz on military strategy and tactics against Islam during the High Middle Ages and Martín Alvira Cabrer's work on the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa have deepened our knowledge about war during this key period in the military expansion of the northern kingdoms (García Fitz 1998; Alvira 2012). The reality of war in Castile in the Late Middle Ages was analysed in the theses of Manuel Rojas Gabriel and Fernando Arias Guillén (Rojas Gabriel 1996; Arias Guillén 2012). The dissertations by Alvira Cabrer on Muret, Sáiz Serrano on the kingdom of Valencia and Mario Lafuente Gómez on Aragon have added significant detail to our knowledge of the military history of the Aragonese crown during the last three centuries of the Middle Ages (Alvira Cabrer 2008; Sáiz 2008; Lafuente 2011 and 2014), and these have already been investigated, with an emphasis on Catalonia, in the pioneering work of María Teresa Ferrer (Ferrer 2001). War in the kingdom of Navarre, particularly during the late medieval period, has been studied mainly by Jon Andoni Fernández de Larrea (Fernández de Larrea 1992 and 2013). As for Portugal, João Gouveia Monteiro's thesis soon became a seminal work for the knowledge of Portuguese military

history during the Late Middle Ages, later complemented by Miguel Gomes Martins' study of the previous period (Monteiro 1998; Martins 2014). Vítor Rodrigues, Rui Bebiano, Luís Sousa, Gonçalo Couceiro Feio and Francisco Contente Domingues made invaluable contributions to the study of the Portuguese 16th century (Rodrigues 1999; Bebiano 2000; Sousa 2016; Feio 2013; Domingues 2017), and those writing about the Spanish Crown during the same period such as Geoffrey Parker and René Quatrefages have engendered a line of continuity in the more recent work of Martínez Ruiz and Rodríguez Hernández (Parker 1991; Quatrefages 1996; Martínez Ruiz 2008; Rodríguez Hernández 2011, 2013 and 2015).

In addition, many other lines of research of a more specific nature have been developed, such as those dedicated to castle architecture in Portugal by Mário Barroca (1991 and 2000), to Spanish and Portuguese weaponry (respectively Soler del Campo 1991; Barroca, Monteiro and Fernandes 2000) as well as those supervised or published by Carlos de Ayala Martínez on military orders in Spain (Ayala 2003), to cite just a few examples. Within this rich panorama, al-Andalus and the kingdom of Granada are still deserving of more in-depth study like the one recently published by Javier Albarrán (Albarrán 2017), although the general contributions of Lévi-Provençal, Rachel Arié and María Jesús Viguera have already created the main framework of investigation for the field (Lévi-Provençal 1982; Arié 1984 and 1993; Viguera, 2000).

Although our emphasis is primarily on Iberian authors, several other researchers, namely from the Anglo-Saxon world, deserve a mention. Peter E. Russell, Derek Lomax, Joseph O'Callaghan, James Powers, Andrew Villalon, Donald Kagay, Theresa Vann and Nicholas Agrait, are just a few of the scholars who have given crucial contributions to this area of study.

These are not, of course, the only studies that have been published on issues related to the Iberian military history of the Middle and Early Modern Ages, but the cited texts give an idea of the extraordinary growth of the field in the last few decades. These new developments have made possible the publication of two great syntheses on peninsular military history in the form of monographic volumes on the Middle Ages: in Portugal, the *Nova História Militar de Portugal*, with Manuel Themudo Barata and Nuno Severiano Teixeira as general editors, was published between 2003 and 2004 in five volumes, of which the first, dedicated to the Middle Ages, was edited by José Mattoso and authored by Mário Jorge Barroca, João Gouveia Monteiro and Luís Miguel Duarte (Barata and Teixeira, Editors, 2003). In Spain, the six volumes of the *Historia Militar de España* were published between 2009 and 2017, with Hugo O'Donnell as general editor, and with a second volume also dedicated to the Middle Ages under the coordination of Miguel Ángel Ladero Quesada, including contributions from many specialists (Ladero Quesada,

Editor, 2010).

These works clearly reveal the methodological differences between past and present: intensive use of archival sources (in particular the Torre do Tombo National Archive in Lisbon, the National Historical Archive of Spain, the Archivo General de Simancas, the Archivo de la Corona de Aragón and the Archivo General de Navarra), detailed knowledge of narrative sources (Portuguese, Spanish and foreign) and a body of up-to-date international bibliography (especially French and Anglo-Saxon) to which we must add a clear concern with the study of the military history of the kingdoms both in their Iberian and international contexts.

The last 25 to 30 years have in fact witnessed the birth of a scientific, technically demanding and very comprehensive military history: not only the study of pitched battles, castles, arms and armoury, but also of recruitment methods, military organization (administration, equipment, finances), strategy, tactics (including not only battles, but also sieges, cavalcades and other types of operations), mental and religious aspects (fear, courage, devotional practices, superstitions), the economic and social effects of war (destruction, social promotion, redistribution of wealth), among other significant aspects.

The 'Iberian Association of Military History, IV–XVI centuries' (aihmilitar.wix.com/site) was founded in 2015 with the stated aim of publicizing, promoting and creating an international profile for this field of study. In order to bring together Portuguese and Spanish specialists, the Association organizes regular academic events and publishes the journal *e-Strategica*, also awarding a biannual prize for young researchers (financed by Banco Santander Totta). Its support has been instrumental in bringing about the present publication.

Thanks to all of this, the military history of the Iberian medieval kingdoms is in good health and is now an integral part of higher educational curricula: in Portugal, there has been since 2013–2014 an inter-university Masters course on Military History, which brings together eight institutions (four universities and all the military schools of higher education), and every year there are about 300 first year students studying Military History in the universities of Coimbra, Lisbon and Universidade Nova de Lisboa. In Spain, the Universidad Complutense de Madrid also launched a Chair of Military History in 2017.

Above all, it has been demonstrated that war has been a major factor for the historical development of many facets of the life of those societies and for the political and territorial composition of peninsular kingdoms.

This accumulation of knowledge now allows us to offer a panoramic view of war in the medieval Iberian Peninsula, which may be very useful both for Iberian students and specialists who wish to have a summary of these topics, especially for those interested around the world who have difficulty in

accessing historiography written in Spanish or Portuguese. This work will offer all of them a first general consideration of the themes that have been researched in Spain and Portugal in the field of medieval military history.

In order to offer an overall perspective as broad and complete as possible, this work has firstly adopted a very extensive chronology, covering the entire medieval period from the 8th to the end of the 15th centuries, as well as the 16th century. The disappearance of the Visigoth kingdom of Toledo and the conquest of the Peninsula by Muslims from the year 711 usually marks the beginning of the Iberian Middle Ages, the end of which is generally accepted as the last decades of the 15th century, coinciding with the disappearance of the last Islamic state – the Nasrid kingdom of Granada – and with the beginnings of the overseas expansion of the peninsular kingdoms throughout Africa and America. From the point of view of military history, the medieval period is distinctly coherent, but also shows very clear transformations, hence most of the chapters are divided into various internal phases, particularly between the Early and High Middle Ages – the 8th to 13th centuries – and the Late Middle Ages – 14th and 15th centuries. As well as including the entire medieval period, we have chosen to extend the study to the 16th century, not only because it enables the fixed and changed aspects of the reality of war to be confirmed with regard to the previous phase, but also due to the extraordinary interest that this century has for Iberian history and for its repercussions on European, African and American history.

From a geopolitical point of view, the criterion adopted in the work is also globally oriented, hence the study of all the Iberian peninsular kingdoms has been included: the kingdoms of Leon and Castile, which emerged from the former kingdom of Asturias, which throughout the period were united and separated on different occasions, although they were definitively united from 1230; the Crown of Aragon, which included the kingdoms of Aragon, Valencia, Mallorca and the Catalan counties; the kingdom of Navarre, organized around the city of Pamplona; and the kingdom of Portugal, which would attain its independence from Leon from the middle of the 12th century. Each of them is the subject of a separate chapter in the book.

The dynastic unit obtained between the crowns of Castile-Leon and Aragon, along with the inclusion of Navarre, simplified this political map, so that in the 16th century there were only two states, Spain and Portugal. The former – the Spanish empire of the 16th century – is studied in a specific chapter, while the study of the Portuguese 16th century has been integrated within the general chapter dedicated to that kingdom.

Furthermore, with the aim of presenting the most complete panorama, the study of the reality of war in al-Andalus has also been included, with two chapters of the book dedicated to this topic. The first deals with the military

history of peninsular Islam from the conquest to the 13th century, which includes historical periods and different states, such as the Umayyad emirate and caliphate of Cordova, the Taifa Kingdoms and the North African Berber Empires – the Almoravids and the Almohads – who integrated al-Andalus within their dominions. The second chapter, which is dedicated to peninsular Islam, focuses on the last Muslim state in the Peninsula, the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada, and it chronologically covers the period from the 13th century until the end of the 15th century.

Finally, following the general criterion of offering the reader a comprehensive general vision of Iberian military history, a varied selection of contents has been included about the most important facets of the reality of war for all the kingdoms and states. In order to historically contextualize the themes dealt with, the various chronological periods studied in each chapter begin with a brief political and military overview of the period that presents the main lines of evolution of each kingdom for each period.

From the point of view of the military organization of the kingdoms and states, special attention has been paid to the various military obligations of the subjects and vassals of the monarchs. We have also explored the main components of the armies and their chains of command: personal guards of the monarchs, forces recruited and led by the nobles, militias offered by the cities, contingents of military orders, castle or other fortress garrisons. The analysis of these realities in all the kingdoms and throughout the whole period presents not only the similarities and differences between one kingdom and another, but it also follows the changes experienced by its military organization down through the centuries and shows the transformation of medieval armies into permanent and professional modern armies. In addition, the study of these aspects in the chapters devoted to al-Andalus demonstrates the enormous differences between the military organizations of the Christian kingdoms and those adopted by the Andalusian and Berber Muslim states.

Another of the themes considered in all the chapters relates to the ways of waging war, the strategies used by the warring parties and the tactics deployed against the enemy. The analysis of these issues reveals a preference for military operations developed within the framework of a strategy of attrition, in which incursions to destroy and loot the adversary's resources predominate: *fonsados*, *cabalgadas, razzias*, *aceifas* were the names for these operations of short duration which became the daily form of combat. However, Iberia was, from very early on, a strongly fortified space where the various warring parties carried out a strategy of controlling terrain, which required the conquest of the strong points associated with this. That is why siege warfare and the great sieges became essential military operation for any force that wanted to expand its political dominion. Finally, pitched battles were

extraordinary episodes which were not very frequent, but they certainly had a strong impact on their contemporaries. Their study also shows the evolution of tactics used on battlefields, from the time of the predominance of heavy cavalry to the 16th century, when infantry was undoubtedly the most important weapon, although not the only one. Once again, the analysis of the ways in which war was carried out by the Andalusian and Berber armies allows us to appreciate the existence of very different tactical models.

The forms of waging war and their evolution are closely related to two other central aspects of military history: armament and fortifications. Both have received particular attention in each chapter, showing their considerable similarities and evolution, practically simultaneous in all the kingdoms, regarding defensive and offensive weaponry for the warrior and also their fortifications. As for the former, perhaps the most noteworthy evolution was the appearance of increasingly heavy equipment and, from the 15th century, the introduction of portable firearms and artillery. In keeping with this latter reality, the analysis of the fortifications shows the transition from the medieval castle to the modern bastion.

Because of its uniqueness in a context in which military operations on the ground predominated, the navy and naval warfare merits a specific section in all the chapters. Needless to say, the importance of naval conflicts and the strength of the navy were very variable from one historical context to another and from one kingdom to another, but in almost all of them we can see a naval presence, sometimes in defining moments. However, as we move forward in time, throughout the Late Middle Ages, and especially in the 16th century, its importance increased at pace with the extension of the interests of the different Iberian kingdoms, firstly in the Mediterranean and, later, in the Atlantic.

There are also specific sections in each chapter on fundamental issues in the management of war, such as logistical and financial aspects. The capacity to move an army, to feed it, to supply it with arms and equipment, and to face the economic cost of its maintenance proved vital in the development of conflicts. As such, the book also looks closely into the organizational, administrative and fiscal mechanisms set up by the Iberian monarchies and Muslim states to overcome the enormous logistical and economic challenges posed by wars.

The Iberian military settings of these centuries, in particular the medieval centuries, show that the warring parties not only had to organize, fight, move, arm, fortify, feed and finance themselves, but they also had to justify and legitimize confrontation with their adversary and build the propaganda discourse necessary to mobilize their populations. In this case, where a large part of the conflicts pitched Christians against Muslims, this generated a whole ideology of war that used arguments linked to the notions of the just war and

holy war. The result crystallized around the concept of the *Reconquista*, combining legal arguments – the claim of an asset (the homeland of Gothic ancestors) unjustly taken away by the Muslims – with other religious elements – the defence of the Church and faith, which was reinforced from the 11th century onwards by the arrival of Roman ideas concerning the crusade. Parallel to this, jihad served in al-Andalus to achieve similar objectives: the justification of war, the legitimation of power and the mobilization of the community.

Finally, in order for the reader to have a broad idea of the development of war in the Peninsula, each chapter offers a selection of the most representative military campaigns, sieges and battles, showing the circumstances, causes, development and consequences of the main military events of the period.

The text is accompanied by a selection of maps that allow the reader to more easily follow some of the campaigns explained and a set of images that illustrate the military reality of the period. Furthermore, a final glossary facilitates the understanding of some of the terms used throughout the book, while the bibliographic selection included will provide the reader with some essential references for a better understanding of war in the Iberian Peninsula between the 8th and 16th centuries.

Francisco García Fitz
João Gouveia Monteiro

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1
Al-Andalus

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Political outline

The conquest of al-Andalus and the first steps

The history of al-Andalus begins in the year 711, when, commanding an army consisting mostly of Berbers and some Arabs, Tariq b. Ziyad crossed the Strait of Gibraltar and initiated the conquest of the Iberian Peninsula at the service of Musa b. Nusayr, the Umayyad ruler of the province of Ifriqiya. Apparently, Tariq achieved a decisive victory against the Visigoth King Rodrigo next to the River Guadalete, although not all scholars agree with this location of the battle. Soon, barely offering any resistance due to the state of decomposition of the Visigothic kingdom, important cities fell one by one, such as Seville, Cordova and Toledo, the Visigothic capital. The success of the expedition led Musa b. Nusayr to intervene directly, and within a few years practically the entire Iberian Peninsula, and even southern France, had been conquered. Al-Andalus was thus established as an additional region of the Umayyad Caliphate of Damascus, dependent on the province of Ifriqiya (Manzano 2006: 29–53).

The Umayyad Emirate of al-Andalus

After the triumph of the Abbasid revolution in the East and the disappearance of the Umayyad Caliphate of Damascus (750), one of the few survivors of the outgoing dynasty, ʿAbd al-Rahman, managed to reach al-Andalus and proclaim himself emir in the year 756. Thus began the period known as the independent Umayyad emirate of al-Andalus, with its capital at Cordova. During this period, Islamic power consolidated in the Iberian Peninsula and the islamization and arabization process began, which did not reach its apex until approximately the 11th century. A few mountainous regions north of al-

Andalus escaped the control of the Umayyad emirs, where, after the legendary Battle of Covadonga (722), the Asturian kingdom would first come into existence. Cordova carried out numerous campaigns against these northern Christians, with the main goal being to prevent them from advancing southwards.

Furthermore, al-Andalus was witness to a period of important internal commotions. Conflicts frequently arose between the central power and the rulers of the marchlands, *thughur* (see Glossary), frontier territories located around the cities of Zaragoza, Toledo and Mérida. Tensions of a social nature also occurred, in which minorities, especially converts to Islam, played an important role. The first symptoms of such conflicts arose under emir Hisham I (d. 796). Early in the 9th century, under al-Hakam I (d. 822), serious riots occurred, such as the one at Toledo in 807, and at Cordova in 818. Severe repression by the authorities managed to solve both situations (Manzano 2006: 189–359).

Under the government of emir ʿAbd al-Rahman II (d. 852), the so-called orientalization of al-Andalus occurred. In addition, an important conflict with the Christian community of Cordova also took place, known as the 'voluntary martyrdom', which ended with the execution of several Christians. Moreover, we must not forget that in the year 844, Normands appeared on the coastline of al-Andalus, more specifically in the vicinity of Lisbon and Seville (Manzano 2006: 189–359).

In the latter half of the 9th century, coinciding with emir Muhammad I (d. 886) and due to greater pressure by the Christians of the north, frontiers were further fortified. However, there were also strong tensions between the emiral power and the lords of the marchlands, such as Ibn Marwan in Mérida and Badajoz or the Banu Qasi dynasty in the Zaragoza region. In any event, the largest riot was initiated in the year 879 by ʿUmar ibn Hafsun in the region of Bobastro. After the shortlived emirate of al-Mundir (d. 888), during which Ibn Hafsun extended his range of action and Toledo underwent rebellion again, the *fitna* (discord or civil war) reached its climax during the emirate of ʿAbd Allah (d. 912). The year 890 was a particularly critical one: the emir only controlled the city of Cordova and its vicinity, whereas the remainder of the territory was atomized into a plethora of autonomous manors. The generalized riot of al-Andalus started to subside from the year 900 onwards, but its complete repression did not take place until the first third of the 10th century, on the verge of the caliphate (Manzano 2006: 189–359).

The Umayyad Caliphate of Cordova

ʿAbd al-Rahman III (d. 961) became emir of Cordova in the year 912, and was soon able to pacify al-Andalus. At the same time, he decided to launch offensives against the Christians of the north, who, at the beginning of the 10th century, taking advantage of internal disputes in al-Andalus, had advanced through the northern plateau, reaching the line of the Duero River. Another danger arose which the emir had to face, namely that of the Fatimids, an Ismaili Shia caliphate established in North African territory in the year 909. However, ʿAbd al-Rahman III's most spectacular success in those years was the crushing of the riot which, after ʿUmar Ibn Hafsun's death in the year 918, his sons had continued. In 928, the fortress of Bobastro, the centre of the rebellion of the Banu Hafsun, fell under the control of Cordova. One year later, encouraged by this victory and in order to fight back against the Fatimid caliphate, the Umayyad ruler proclaimed himself caliph with the title of *al-Nasir li-din Allah*, thus initiating the period known as the Umayyad caliphate of Cordova (Manzano 2006: 363–469; Fierro 2011).

In the following years he continued his victorious march, successfully constraining the dissidence within the frontier territories, especially Toledo and Zaragoza, and leading successful campaigns against Christian territories, such as the Osma campaign in 934. However, ʿAbd al-Rahman III did suffer some defeats against the Christians, the most significant being the one at Simancas in the year 939, after which the caliph would no longer undertake any more expeditions.

In North Africa, Cordova remarkably improved its position, especially due to the conquest of the city of Ceuta in 931. The indisputable prestige obtained by the Umayyad caliph enabled him to establish relationships with both the Byzantine Empire and with the newly born Roman-Germanic Empire. ʿAbd al-Rahman III also ordered the construction, to the west of the city of Cordova, of the magnificent city-palace of Madinat al-Zahra', which became the centre of the caliphal power and the construction of which was finished by his son. As such, the power of the Cordova Umayyad had reached its apogee (Manzano 2006: 363–469; Fierro 2011).

His son al-Hakam II (d. 976) succeeded him on the caliphal throne. His brief reign experienced a few shocking events. For instance, the establishment of the Fatimids in Egypt in the year 969 meant their definitive withdrawal from the Maghreb region, a situation exploited by Cordova to restore its control over the western zone of northern Africa. Moreover, arts and culture underwent spectacular development in al-Andalus during this period, the most representative examples being the alleged library gathered by al-Hakam II and the enlargement of the Great Mosque of Cordova with its spectacular *mihrab*, which represents an interesting cultural exchange with Byzantium. However, an important change occurred in the times of al-Hakam II's successor, his still

underage son Hisham II (d. 1009). Effective power was assumed by his tutor, Ibn Abi ʿAmir (d. 1002), Almanzor, who eventually became the true leader of al-Andalus. Almanzor, who had the support of the Berbers, started a vigorous political propaganda to legitimate his power. From the religious point of view, he was extremely orthodox, and turned the army, the *jihad* and the numerous victories he obtained into the basis of his power. Among his many incursions into Christian territory, those that stand out are Barcelona (985) and Santiago de Compostela (997). After the brief rulership of one of Almanzor's sons, ʿAbd al-Malik (d. 1008), caliph Hisham II abdicated in the year 1009. A great *fitna* or civil war followed thereafter, which would lead to the disintegration of the Umayyad caliphate and to the *taifa* kingdoms (Echevarría 2011).

The taifa *kingdoms*

In November 1031, the Umayyad caliphate of Cordova was officially abolished, whereby the civil war between the different factions worsened. The result of this process was the rise of 30 minor kingdoms ruled by local dynasties, namely the *taifa* kingdoms. Traditionally, three larger groups were established according to their ethnic background: Berber *taifas*, in the centre, west and south of the Peninsula; Slavic *taifas*, on the Mediterranean seaboard; and Arab-Andalusi *taifas*, in south-western al-Andalus and in the Ebro valley. The most powerful ones were those founded on the old Umayyad frontier marches, like Toledo (the Banu Dhi al-Nun, Arabs) or Zaragoza (the Banu Hud, Arabs), but Seville (the ʿAbbadids, Arabs) and Granada (the Zirids, Berbers) were of great importance (Guichard and Soravia 2005).

Nevertheless, one must not underestimate the military and economic capacity nor the exercise of sovereignty that presided over the governmental action of the most important kingdoms, capable of stopping the expansionist momentum of the Christian kingdoms for decades and of growing through the annexation of weaker nearby territories. Within this context, there are figures like that of Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, the Cid, the noble Castilian confronted with Alfonso VI who, after leaving Castile, put himself at the service of kings such as al-Muqtadir of Zaragoza and eventually occupied the *taifa* of Valencia (1094–1099). Moreover, the Christian kingdoms, making use of military pursuit, were able to implant the *parias* regime, whereby kings such as Sancho Garcés IV of Pamplona (d. 1076) obtained substantial payments from the *taifa* of Zaragoza in exchange for peace and assistance (Guichard and Soravia 2005).

While the economic development of the Muslim statelets tolerated the *parias* system, the survival of the *taifas* was guaranteed, but once this ceased,

Christian expansionist pressure increased which led to the disappearance of the *taifa* kingdoms. Finally, the fall of Toledo before Alfonso VI of Castile in 1085 forced the *taifa* kings to seek help in North Africa, specifically from the nascent Almoravid Empire.

The Almoravids

The movement of the Almoravids, literally the 'dwellers of the *ribat*', took place on the African Atlantic coast, 500 kilometres north of the Senegal River. The objective of the founder of the movement, the pious Maliki missionary Ibn Yasin (d. 1059), was none other than to extend his vision of Islam among the Berber tribes, making use, when necessary, of the *jihad*.

After Ibn Yasin's death, Abu Bakr b. 'Umar (d. 1088) rose to power and laid the bases for sedentariness with the foundation of Marrakech (1071). He began to look towards the Maghreb and al-Andalus instead of the Sahara. When Yusuf b. Tashufin (d. 1106) took over the leadership in 1073, the jump across the Strait into al-Andalus was only a matter of time. The process quickened first with the fall of Barbastro and Coimbra (1064) and later with the fall of Toledo (1085). The *taifa* kings of Seville, Badajoz and Granada asked the emir for help against Alfonso VI and the request was answered with the Almoravid victory over the Christian troops in the Battle of Zalaca on 23 October 1086. Four years later, the Berber dynasty made the decision to conquer al-Andalus and to finish off the fragmented *taifa* kingdoms (Bennison 2016).

On 8 September 1090, the Zirid king 'Abd Allah of Granada handed the city over to the North African emir. Next came Malaga, Tarifa, Cordova and within a few months the entire Andalusi territory. Thus, unification of the entire Islamic West under one government was achieved with the Almoravids for the first time. In view of this, sources exalt this phenomenon as opposed to the previous chaos. In al-Andalus, the hunger for reunification, especially from the point of view of the caliphal legitimists, is reflected in numerous texts, which consider the Almoravids true saviours. Moreover, the Almoravid regime relied on the same social, political and ideological bases as the Seljuk sultanate in the East: acknowledgement of the (Abbasid) caliph's weakness and the consequent possibility for an independent local authority to legitimize himself in practice due to delegation of power on the caliph's part. All this added to an important connection with the Maliki elites, which had wielded indisputable influence ever since the Cordova emirate (Bennison 2016).

Yusuf b. Tashufin was succeeded by his son 'Ali b. Yusuf (d. 1143), under whose government the first symptoms of Almoravid decadence became visible

on three fronts: the Christian advance, the Andalusi unrest and the rise of the Almohads. Still in 1108, victory was attained at Uclés, and in 1110 the *taifa* of Zaragoza was conquered, but in 1118 the latter city fell to Alfonso I of Aragon. These mishaps were followed by the ever more pressing unrest of the Andalusis. In addition, the Almohad problem was growing ever more serious. When the son of the emir ʻAli, Tashufin b. ʻAli, took the reins of the empire in 1143, it was already fatally wounded. Only two years later, in 1145, the ʻprince of the Muslims' fell in battle against the new North African power, the Almohads, which had been taking shape. In 1147, the successors of Ibn Tumart, founder of the Almohad movement, seized Marrakech, thus bringing the Almoravid dynasty to an end (Bennison 2016).

The Almohads

In the early 12th century, a reformationist movement rose up in the Maghrebi Atlas that changed completely the political, social and religious scenario of the Islamic West. Muhammad Ibn Tumart (d. 1130), founder of this new impulse, along with the *Masmuda* Berber tribes that supported him, was beginning to preach and impose his doctrine, a new orthodoxy, against the Almoravids. The members of this new reformationist spiral considered themselves the restorers of the original purity of Islam. The Almohad project relied on two pillars: obedience to the impeccable and infallible *mahdi* Ibn Tumart and to his successors, and radical unity, thus receiving the name of *al-muwahhidun*, i.e. the unitarians. Nevertheless, one may not speak of an Almohad 'doctrine', but of an 'evolving doctrine'. Although Ibn Tumart's successor, the self-proclaimed caliph ʻAbd al-Mu'min (d. 1163), conqueror of Marrakech and initiator of the seizing of al-Andalus, tried to continue the *mahdi*'s alleged prescriptions, the second caliph, Abu Yaʻqub (d. 1184), tended much more towards the philosophical elites, whereas the winner of the Battle of Alarcos, al-Mansur (d. 1199), turned to the traditionalists (Bennison 2016).

Shortly before the conquest of Marrakech in 1147 by the Almohads, this new movement had already carried out various incursions into peninsular territory. After the disappearance of the Almoravids, al-Andalus was once again divided into petty kingdoms ruled by local leaders such as the notorious Ibn Mardanish, the 'wolf king', who ruled Murcia and Valencia and would provide strong resistance to the arrival of the new North African empire, as did the Banu Ghaniyya in the Balearic Islands. Seville, which was conquered in 1147, became the Almohad capital of al-Andalus. As the Almohad expansion continued, the North Africans had to confront both Andalusi rebels (they

would put an end to the danger represented by Ibn Mardanish in 1172, and by the Banu Ghaniyya in 1203) and Christian kingdoms. In fact, the caliph Abu Ya'qub, who entertained intellectuals such as Averroes and Ibn Tufayl in his court, would die in 1184 while leading the *jihad* against the infidel in Santarém. His successor received the epithet of al-Mansur, the 'Victorious', for his triumph in the famous Battle of Alarcos (1195) against Alfonso VIII of Castile. This would mark the climax of the Almohad power (Bennison 2016).

Abu Yusuf al-Mansur was succeeded by his son, Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad al-Nasir (d. 1213), who proved incapable of resisting the opposition of two simultaneous fronts, one in North Africa and the other in al-Andalus. He was defeated in the Iberian Peninsula by an amalgam of Christian forces led by Alfonso VIII in the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212), which marked the beginning of the end of the Almohad control in al-Andalus. Moreover, new Maghrebi movements, such as that of the Marinids, began to threaten the Almohad authority. After al-Nasir's death in 1213, a number of caliphs rapidly succeeded one another until 1228, when al-Ma'mun, ruler of Seville, abandoned the city and proclaimed himself caliph by crossing to North Africa. He was the last Almohad ruler in al-Andalus. Although there still were some isolated Almohad authorities in Andalusi territory, the central power no longer existed (Bennison 2016).

New independent kingdoms, new *taifas*, appeared, constantly fighting one another and in close relationship with the Christian kingdoms, with which they allied and from which they constantly requested help. The Christians, in turn, took advantage of the situation of collapse of the Almohad power to conquer a substantial part of the Andalusi territory, as Fernando III did with the emblematic cities of Cordova (1236) and Seville (1248), or Jaime I of Aragon with Valencia (1238). Of all the independent Andalusi kingdoms that had been established, only that of Yusuf Ibn Nasr (Muhammad I or Ibn al-Ahmar, d. 1273) survived, later to become the Nasrid kingdom of Granada.

Recruitment system and composition of the armies

Military obligations and recruitment methods

Available sources supply little information on the military obligations that existed in al-Andalus or on the recruitment methods and, when they do, it is

not possible to be absolutely certain of correctly identifying what they refer to. However, an outline can be sketched which gives us a general idea of the situation.

To begin with, in Umayyad-period chronicles the *diwan al-jund/al-jaysh* (see Glossary) is frequently mentioned, which, apparently, was a military record verifying that the forces had a fixed salary, both soldiers and officers, which all bore the name *mutadawwan*. To this register further lists of forces were occasionally added, known as *malahiq al-diwan* (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Meouak 1993: 361–391).

Who was subject to the service of arms in al-Andalus? In the first place, the *jund* (see Glossary), i.e. the Arabs of Syrian origin who were descendants of the troops that arrived with Balj in the year 741 to suppress the Berber rebellion, grouped into territorial districts that were under the denomination of *kora mujannada*, i.e. *koras* formed into *junds*. Initially, these forces of Syrian origin, who had received a concession of lands, an *iqta'* (see Glossary), had to heed the call to arms for no further compensation, although they eventually gained more benefits such as the *'ata'*, a payment that was given before each expedition. After the Umayyad period, these territorial and military districts lived on until those of the Nasrid kingdom of Granada, which Ibn al-Khatib must have been referring to when he indicated how his emir Muhammad V put him in charge of the military command, the *qiyada*, in the district of Orgiva. Moreover, it seems that in the 10th century the term *jund* referred not only to the descendants of those who arrived with the Syrian Balj, but also to any Andalusi subject to military service. In other words, the *jund* was apparently shaped into a regular army of a permanent character, inscribed in a register and dependent on the central power for everything related to management, equipment, financing and maintenance. It should not be forgotten that the *jund* also fought together with voluntary troops that were recruited during the entire history of al-Andalus through the call to holy war (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Chalmeta 1988: 33–42).

Additionally, the *hushud* (see Glossary) and the *bu'uth* were two types of forces also subject to some form of mandatory service. The former, who in an early stage might have been the descendants of the Arabs settled in al-Andalus, were also formed through recruitment. The latter group was apparently made up from the city-dwellers who were not part of the *jund*. Both the *hashd* and the *ba'th* could be avoided by paying a special tribute or by finding a substitute, a practice that is also attested in preIslamic Arabia and during the first conquests of Islam. This gave place to a 'combatantrental' contract, the *isti'jar ghazi*, between the substituee, *mustanfar*, i.e. he who had been levied, and the substitute, the *na'ib*, of whom, unfortunately, no evidence has been found apart from al-Jaziri's notarial formulary in the 12th century.

Contrarily, it is known that the exemption from the duty of recruitment gave rise to a specific tax called *daribat al-hashd*, which is first attested in the early 9th century, during the time of the emirs al-Hakam I and ʿAbd al-Rahman II. It is possible that mercenary troops were paid with this tax (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Chalmeta 1988: 33–42).

The call to ranks, *istinfar* (see Glossary), for expeditions, which received the name of *sa'ifa*, because these were usually made in the summertime, took place during the months of February and March. At that time, troops were levied in all territorial districts (*koras*) of the state in two ways: firstly, each province's rulers met and sent to a specific place, usually the capital Cordova, the men appearing in that *kora*'s *diwan*; secondly, enrolments (*hushud*) were accepted, which were in charge of recruiting agents, *hashid*. We can get an idea of the recruitment capacity of the Cordova emirate thanks to the cavalry census communicated by the chronicler Ibn Hayyan on the occasion of an expedition by the emir Muhammad I against the Asturians in the year 863: 2,900 men in the *kora* of Elvira, 2,200 in Jaén, 1,800 in Cabra, 900 in Priego, 1,200 in Écija, 256 in Tudmir, 1,403 in Morón, and so on, up to a total of 22,000 knights. Besides *koras*, in this document castles were also included as troop suppliers, such as that of Calatrava. The difference in combatants supplied by each location could have been due to two reasons: the military capacity of each one of these territories, and the control Cordova had on each one of them (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Chalmeta 1988: 33–42; Meouak 1993: 361–391; Viguera 2001: 17–60).

Furthermore, each frontier region, *thaghr*, had to contribute troops to the caliphal expedition when this passed through their territories and upon request. Apparently, during the Umayyad period three *thughur* took place, but this cannot be ascertained, since its denomination kept changing. The upper frontier region had its capital at Zaragoza, the central one at Toledo and later at Medinaceli, and the lower one at Mérida and later at Badajoz. Troop recruiting in these provinces was a complex matter because of the independent and rebellious attitude towards Cordova of many of the lineages that ruled over them. Hence, for instance, sources often mention how the Cordovan caliph headed for these *thughur* before heading to Christian territory in order to secure their rulers' loyalty and his troop supply (Manzano 1991: 23–69).

Almanzor's ascent to power changed this situation, since the Andalusis were no longer forced to undertake military service and a special tax was collected with which mercenary troops were paid, especially troops from northern Africa. After making a record of properties, a collective sum was fixed and paid by the proprietors according to a system of quotas. Moreover, it seems that the *taifa* kings continued with this established precedent. For example, Zirid Granada used a division of the kingdom into districts which he entrusted

to relatives in charge of tax-collecting and making payments to soldiers. We have no specific information on the average payment, but, for specific cases, some sources speak of two dinars daily plus meat and drink. The Almoravids also used a record called, unsurprisingly, *diwan al-jund*, for recruitment, where the combatants were inscribed. For this, every so often a mustering of troops, *'ard* (see Glossary), took place, through which both the number of forces available to them and their condition were examined (Aguilar 1997: 192–206; Marín 1999: 193–225; Echevarría 2011: 119–136).

During the Almohad period there was also a *diwan* in which troops were entered, an *'ard* or mustering of troops, and a division of the army into different provinces. Sources mention regular armies stationed in cities like Seville, Marrakech, Valencia, Murcia, Granada and Cordova. The city governors actively cooperated in the administrative and economic management of the army through, for instance, the distribution of service payment or the control of land concessions. These governors were possibly in charge of the mandatory, temporal and extraordinary recruitment of the *hushud*, i.e. troops with lower military preparation than the regular Almohad forces which, once their service was over, returned to their normal occupations (Aguilar 1997: 192–206; García Fitz 2012: 275–301).

Composition of the armies

Umayyad Period

The Andalusi armies, *jaysh*, were mainly composed of three kinds of forces: firstly, forces that were permanent or supplied by levies among the Andalusis subject to military service; secondly, mercenaries; and, finally, volunteers for holy war.

The troops of the *jund*, those called up, constituted the bulk of the forces of the Cordovan emirate and caliphate, probably until Almanzor's reforms. Certainly, it was a centralized army, but we do find some divisions in some sources, such as that existing between the army of the capital, *al-jaysh al-hadra*, and the frontier army, *al-jaysh al-thaghr*. Apparently, *jund* forces were moved to launch specific campaigns or to momentarily reinforce a certain region, due to the minor entity of the permanent forces at the service of the local authorities. The composition of the troops of the *jund* basically consisted of cavalry, *fursan*, and infantry, *rajjala* (including archers), but it must be borne in mind that foot soldiers must have been considered of lesser

importance, as they are infinitely less reflected in the texts (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Arié 1984: 122–136; Chalmeta 1988: 33–42; Viguera 2001: 17–60).

FIGURE 1.1 Muslim hor seman. *Arqueta de Leyre*, 10th century. (Creative Commons)

There were also those denominated *hasham* (see Glossary), mercenaries, of a very different provenance (prior rebel lords with their own retinues, foreigners, ex-captives, slaves, Christian mercenaries that had kept their religion, slaves converted to Islam, and freed slaves, etc.), converted into professional soldiers. In contrast with the members of the *jund*, the *hushud* and the *bu'uth*, these were available at all times, thus becoming a permanent army of sorts. As mentioned above, they appeared first as a bodyguard for emir al-Hakam I, among which were the famous mutes (*khurs*), so called due to their not knowing the Arab language. This emir's initiative came along with a reorganization of the Andalusi troops, to which he gave regular units, and with the establishment at Cordova of the arms deposits and military stocks that stored the items produced in the official workshops. The strength of the *hasham* resided in a few thousand knights that were considered Cordovan shock forces, the best soldiers in the army. The importance of these troops was such that the individual responsible for their inspection had the status of vizier. Below him was the *sahib al-ahsham*, the chief of the *hasham*, an office

superimposed on that of *sahib al-khayl*, chief of the cavalry, which seems to point to the fact that the majority of these forces were mounted on horses. These troops, also recorded in the *diwan*, besides their corresponding pay, also received their mount (*humlan*), their harness for their horse (*hilya*), their arms (*silah*), their right to accommodation, food rations, and fodder. Furthermore, the palace guard inaugurated by al-Hakam I and, as already noted, made up of these *hasham*, received the name of *da'ira*, comprising 3,000 knights and 2,000 infantrymen, both of a servile condition (*mamluk*), who could be Galicians, Franks, Slavs, etc. Organized into companies of 100 men, the tradition of foreign mercenaries making up the royal guard would remain in use in al-Andalus and in the Maghreb until the end of the Middle Ages. Together with these *hasham*, Umayyad sources, at least since the 9th century, present another mercenary category formed by Maghrebi Berber militias and, to a lesser degree, by black men of Sudanese origin and of a servile condition, *'abid* (see Glossary). They represented the lowest level of the military hierarchy and carried the generic name of Tangerines (*tanjiyyun*), for it seems it was at Tanger were they registered and embarked for al-Andalus (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Arié 1984: 122–136; Chalmeta 1988: 33–42; Viguera 2001: 17–60).

After Almanzor's reforms, the situation changed. The wage-earning Berber troops became the majority in the caliphal army. For the *hajib* of caliph Hisham II, the intensive recruitment of Berbers as a means of substituting Andalusi levies had its advantages: an increase in their forces to face the summer raids (*sa'ifa*), and a way of weakening the prestige of the Arab military aristocracy and of the Slav mercenaries in the capital, thus further underpinning Almanzor's power. Often, they were entire tribal groups, under the orders of their own chiefs, who crossed the Strait to serve in Almanzor's army. Meanwhile, in exchange for exemption from military service, the Andalusis had to pay a tax to hire and equip these mercenary troops (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Arié 1984: 122–136; Viguera 2001: 17–60).

As has already been noted, the third type of forces available to the Andalusi army were *jihad* volunteers, designated by sources as *mutatawwi'a*, *muttawwi'a*, *mujahidun*, *ahl al-jihad* or *ahl al-ribat*. These groups, heterogeneous with regard to provenance and preparation, constituted the least efficient corps of the army. Their enthusiasm to fight the infidel seldom compensated for their modest military training. They appear in the sources as joining and accompanying the centralized military expeditions, and in frontier zones as well, both on land and on sea, doing *ribat* (see Glossary), i.e. going to frontier fortresses to carry out a military activity which could certainly be active and offensive, but which was usually, instead, pious, ascetic, passive and, eventually, defensive (Viguera 2001: 17–60; Marín 2004: 191–201).

Taifa *kingdoms*

The disappearance of the caliphate along with the reign of the *taifa* kings also introduced some remarkable novelties in the composition and, especially, in the typology and terminology of their armies. Besides the terms *jund* and *hasham*, inherited from the Umayyad period, new names for the different units that composed each army can be found, such as *katiba* or *sariyya*, yet it is not possible to accurately determine what they made reference to. Words also occur that seem to refer to small-sized detachments, such as *ta'ifa* or *firqa*. This was perhaps due to the limited number of combatants that, for obvious demographical and economic reasons, made up the local armies during this period. The kingdom of Seville, without a doubt the greatest *taifa* military power, had only 1,300 knights when it conquered Cordova. Moreover, although the previous caliphal capital seems to have also preserved the term *da'ira* to make reference to the palace guard, at least during the first years after the disappearance of the caliphate, new names also arose for these elite troops, such as *'abid*, *fityan* and *ghulman*. Furthermore, and essentially due to the situation of instability and defencelessness that some regions were experiencing, new types of forces appeared, such as, for instance, an urban militia at Cordova in the mid11th century, whose ultimate objective was to defend the city (Arié 1984: 122–136; Marín 1999: 193–225; Viguera 2001: 17–60; Guichard and Soravia 2005: 211–238).

Because of Almanzor's reforms, the Berbers still formed the most important component of the *taifa* armies. Troops of slave origin formed another basic component. Among these stood out the blacks, the *'abid*, who occasionally appeared as the praetorian guard of several monarchs, such as the Zirids of Granada. However, one must not ignore either the ever more numerous presence of northern Christian mercenaries, Franks, who began to play an increasing role in the Andalusi military structures. Despite certain Islamic texts forbidding the use of non-Muslims in their armies, the famous Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) justified their use by mentioning the need that Islamic rulers had of the Christian cavalry forces, but did not for the undertaking of the *jihad* against the infidel, in order to prevent Christian militias from rebelling against the Muslims (Arié 1984: 122–136; Marín 1999: 193–225; Viguera 2001: 17–60; Guichard and Soravia 2005: 211–238; García Sanjuán 2006: 435–447).

Almoravids

As for the Almoravids, their armies stand out for their heterogeneity,

something that would be even more characteristic in the case of the Almohads. At first, the army was composed of contingents of the *Lamtuna* Berber tribe, the main one among those that formed the Almoravid confederation. Later on, troops from other tribes would join up, such as the *Massufa* or the *Ghuddala* mercenary forces, Andalusis and, naturally, *jihad* volunteers (one must not forget that Almoravid means precisely 'those who do *ribat*'). In fact, for the first time in al-Andalus the Almoravids introduced the custom of rewarding holy war combatants recognized for their valour with concessions of land in usufruct. Moreover, one of the earliest pieces of information offered by Arabic sources with regard to the Almoravid army was the decision made by emir Yusuf b. Tashufin to create a personal guard composed of black, *'abid*, and white slaves, *'uluj*, which was given the name *hasham*, a collective which can also be designated by terms such as *fityan* or *ghulma*. According to sources, in the year 1071 the emir bought 2,000 black slaves and provided them with mounts. Once in al-Andalus, he acquired 250 white slaves, also knights. Later, Berber contingents from allied tribes also joined, some of which became a part of those *hasham*. There was another group, somewhat obscure in the chronicles, called *al-dakhiliyyun*, the domestics, which was formed by white slaves. These diverse groups were used to form a palace guard of about 3,000 forces, which reflected the sovereign's need to make a professional and most loyal body of the army not related to his tribe. These troops were so assimilated to Almoravid power, that the term *hasham* would become synonymous with the latter in some Almohad sources. To all these corps one should also add that of the archers, an activity in which the first to be engaged were the *'abid al-makhzan*, slaves of the dynasty or of the state (Lagardère 1979: 99–114; Arié 1984: 122–136; Aguilar 1997: 192–206).

After they had crossed the Strait of Gibraltar, the Berber troops of the *taifa* kingdoms and some Andalusi forces joined the Almoravid armies. The services of the latter were highly esteemed for their knowledge of the terrain and of the Christians' fighting techniques and for their combat capacity during sieges. For instance, the Aledo siege (1089) was accomplished with the help of Andalusi contingents. This Andalusi involvement in the Almoravid military structure caused them to establish their residence at Marrakech (Lagardère 1979: 99–114; Arié 1984: 122–136; Aguilar 1997: 192–206).

With the Almoravids, a phenomenon was becoming visible in the Maghreb which was already occurring in al-Andalus among the *taifa* armies, namely the presence of Christian knights acting in northern Africa at the service of the North African dynasty. Sources attribute the initiative of having been the first to use Christians as combat militias and tax collectors to the second Almoravid emir, 'Ali b.Yusuf. The only explanation given by Arab sources is that by the famous Ibn Khaldun, based on an argument of a military and merely technical

nature, namely that Christian militias were extremely useful, as they were used to stand fast in battle and could supply the North African armies with a strong rearguard. Trust in the Christians' military ability was the second reason, since rulers let them take charge of collecting taxes. This job could be extremely lucrative for mercenaries, for if force was required to collect taxes, the collected fee amounted to double the agreed quantity, half of it to be kept by the chief of the Christian militia. Furthermore, the Tunisian scholar states that Christian militias were immune to the different Islamic religious movements, so their loyalty was rarely at stake (García Sanjuán 2006: 435–447).

Many diverse explanations have been given for the origin of these Christian mercenary troops, yet the most plausible one is of a political nature: they were denaturalized knights who, having had a conflict of one kind or another with their lords, made the decision to seek exile in the lands of infidels, either to fight against their previous kings, or simply as a means of living. They had a remarkable level of importance in the Almoravid army. For example, the Christian knight Reverter (d. 1144–1145) and his militias were a key element in the resistance against the Almohads (García Sanjuán 2006: 435–447).

Almohads

The Almohads continued with the typological structure of troops we have already seen, namely a regular army, forces recruited through obligatory recruitment, mercenaries and holy war volunteers. However, behind this organization it is possible to find an extremely heterogeneous army, especially with regard to the provenance of the troops. Nevertheless, such diversity was not equivalent to military inefficiency, since on numerous occasions the Almohad fighting forces showed great reliability and efficiency in battle (Aguilar 1997: 192–206; Molénat 2005: 547–565).

We do not know for certain what the relation was between the regular army and such a plurality of forces of diverse provenance. Perhaps at first the *jund* was only formed by primitive Almohad tribes, mostly *Masmuda*, but what seems sure is that it eventually opened up to the participation not only of contingents from other Berber tribes, but also from other ethnic groups and traditions, a process which seems to have been consolidated in the late 12th and early 13th centuries. Thus, in the regular army, there were, for instance, Arab troops, Kurdish horsemen and Andalusi hosts. It is not clear either if that regular army paid by the central power was always available or if there existed different degrees of mobilization depending on the type of campaign. In this

sense, sources sometimes distinguish between contingents called *al-Ǧumu'* (the community), who received pay and had settled permanently in the capital, Marrakech, and others denominated *al-'Umum* (the commons), who only appeared in major mobilizations (Aguilar 1997: 192–206; Molénat 2005: 547–565; García Fitz 2012: 275–359).

Of all the heterogeneous elements, the novelty with respect to the previous situation lay in the Arab and Kurdish troops. *Hilal* Arab tribes, experienced horsemen, entered the Almohad army as a consequence of the empire's eastward expansion, towards Ifriqiyya, where they had settled since the 11th century. As they could have represented a destabilizing factor, they were quickly integrated in the army so as to keep them occupied and controlled, always under the argument that they wished to participate in the *jihad*. As for the Kurds, although their origin is somewhat obscure, it seems that they were Turkmenian tribes from Western Turkistan who emigrated westward until they integrated in the Almohad Empire from approximately 1180. Sources called them *ghuzz* (pl. *aghzaz*) and from the outset they represented a highly specialized body in the Almohad empire, as lightly armed mounted archers that contributed a great deal of mobility to the army (Aguilar 1997: 192–206; García Fitz 2012: 275–359).

There is also information on another three types of forces which were of great importance for the Almohad armies and which were already noted in earlier periods, namely black slave contingents, Christian mercenaries and volunteers of faith. The function of the *'abid* (black slaves) was to defend the caliph, so they normally appear in sources standing beside him and always as the last obstacle before reaching the caliph's tent. It is not strange, therefore, that in tales loaded with legendary facts they were even presented as chained to his tent. As for Christian mercenaries, one had to wait to the last decades of the caliphate, a period of decadence beginning around the year 1220, for these troops to assume a considerable weight in the Almohad army. In fact, their importance was almost a capital one in the case of some caliphs like al-Ma'mun. We are told by Ibn Abi Zar' that he signed a treaty (of dubious veracity) with Fernando III in 1228, whereby the Castilian king provided an army in exchange for ten fortresses, the building of a church at Marrakech, the denouncement to Christian authorities of Christians willing to convert to Islam, and the acceptance of all Muslims who wished to follow the teachings of Christ. Moreover, holy war volunteers also had a strong presence, more symbolic and ideological than effective, in the Almohad ranks. The *jihad* was an important pillar of legitimation for the Almohad caliphate, in which a strong bond existed between religiosity and war. Hence, in nearly every campaign, especially major expeditions, one found these types of troops, including different men of religion like *'ulama'* and Sufis (Aguilar 1993: 393–

415; García Sanjuán 2006: 435–447; García Fitz 2012: 275–359).

Chain of command

Sources provide a slight impression of the ranks that made up the army. The sovereign himself took charge of the troops on certain occasions, especially those linked to holy war, but normally he delegated these duties to a high ranking army officer, mainly a member of the dynasty or linked to it. Moreover, texts mention the *qa'id* (see Glossary) as the person in charge of the command of the army or of part of it. He could lead both infantrymen and knights, and hold the military command of a stronghold or of a territory. In the mid-14th century Nasrid Ibn Hudhayl left us a description of the structure of Andalusi army ranks which, although it may be taken back to the Umayyad period, must be considered as perhaps simply reflecting an ideal organization and, therefore, never put into practice. There would have been units of 5,000 men led by a commander, *amir*, identified by a large standard, *raya*. Every 1,000 men of this unit would be led by a *qa'id*, who, in turn, was identified by a flag, *'alam*. Those thousand men were divided into squads of 200 led by a captain, *naqib*, who was entrusted with a pennant, *liwa*. Those 200 were subdivided in five sections of 40 men each commanded by a master, *'arif*, who carried a guidon. Finally, each of those sections was distributed into five squads of eight soldiers each under the orders of a guard, *nazir*, whose spear carried a knot for an emblem, *'uqda*. Additionally, the texts make reference to other commands, such as the cavalry, *khuttat al-khayl*, the armoury, *khizanat al-silah*, or logistics, *khazin al-safar* (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Arié 1984: 122–136; Meouak 1993: 361–391; Viguera 2001: 17–60).

As for the *taifa* period, kings usually led armies, as many of them had previously been military chiefs of the caliphate. Besides monarchs, members of the ruling dynasties were also entrusted with the leadership of the troops, as was the case with the Sevillian 'Abbadids, and even generals that did not belong to the family in power. The latter usually held other offices, such as that of vizier. In the Berber *taifa* kingdoms, the structure of military power could also reflect North African tribal organization (Marín 1999: 193–225).

During the first moments of the Almoravid expansion, the military command was held by members of the *Lamtuna* tribe. The leadership of the troops, however, was later left in the hands of members of other tribes that belonged to the Almoravid confederation and of some Andalusis. The armies would be divided into five groups of 1,000 soldiers each, a distribution called *khumasi*, also used by the Marinid *diwan* (Lagardère 1979: 99–114; Aguilar

1997: 192–206).

Although it is true that the ethnic-cultural identity of each type of unit inside the Almohad army was not entirely lost and is easily traceable in the different operations narrated in the sources, this heterogeneity was somewhat palliated with the imposition of a strong chain of command, at the top of which stood the caliph himself. In fact, the presence of the sovereign in the rear of the army in many campaigns could be used as an instrument of cohesion for so great a diversity of forces, besides, of course, the ideological significance it brought. In the chain of command, under the caliph would stand the *sayyid*, i.e. an Almohad nobility of sorts formed by different members of the ruling family, which monopolized nearly all government and administrative functions, including, of course, military functions. Sometimes subordinated to those in the military structure were the *talaba*, a juridical and religious elite educated in Almohad ideology that even commanded some war actions (Aguilar 1997: 192–206; Molénat 2005: 547–565).

Military operations

There were three fundamental types of war actions, which will shape this section: raids and attrition warfare; siege, position and conquest warfare; and pitched battles.

Attrition warfare

Attrition warfare essentially consisted of expeditions – *al-ghara* or *al-ghazwa* according to sources – nearly always quick and sudden, sometimes led by the sovereign in person. They were the most frequent kind of war action in a context undoubtedly marked by the frontier between the Andalusi world and the Christian kingdoms. Their objective was to weaken the enemy's military, economic, political and social structures without bearing the high cost that a pitched battle could entail. The most common were spring–summer expeditions, called *sa'ifa*, for obvious climatic, but also economic, reasons: damage was always greater immediately before the harvest was collected. In the Umayyad period, the person responsible for their execution received the name of *sahib al-sa'ifa* (García Fitz 1998: 59–126; Viguera 2001: 17–60).

To carry out a yearly expedition against infidel territory was one of the obligations of the Muslim ruler according to Islamic political theory treatises.

Therefore, these were carefully planned from a military and symbolic point of view. After the troops were gathered and mustered with the help of the *diwan*, the armies met at Cordova, where the display, *buruz* (see Glossary), usually took place. About 20 days later, the army left on campaign. On the Friday prior to the departure of the *sa'ifa*, flags were given to each corps of the army and then tied (*'aqd al-awliya*), and standards were handed in to the Great Mosque of Cordova. When the army returned from the military campaign, these standards were hung again on the Great Mosque walls. This tradition was still in use in the Muslim west: in the year 1190, for instance, a similar ceremony took place with the Almohad caliph Ya'qub al-Mansur (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Arié 1984: 142–148; Chalmeta 1988: 33–42).

Troops then headed towards the frontier, where they could receive reinforcements, and entered enemy territory, where they carried out different attrition actions: destruction of towns and strongholds, prisoner- and slave-capturing, communication line-cutting, or burning down crop-fields. Marching speed was about 25 kilometres a day and followed a fixed order: the vanguard, *muqaddama*, led the march, while the rearguard, *saqa*, covered it. In turn, the wings, *ajnah*, defended the flanks. Also, guides, *dala'il* (sing. *dalil*), were usually hired, often enemy defectors who thus secured the efficiency of the campaign (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Arié 1984: 142–148; Chalmeta 1988: 33–42; Marín 1999: 193–225).

Siege warfare

The control of a region under dispute was only feasible by means of the construction, occupation or destruction of its castles. The control of a given space necessarily required the annexation of castles and fortresses. Hence, siege warfare, often combined with the aforementioned attrition warfare, the ultimate purpose of which could be the conquest of a stronghold, was one of the greatest expressions of Medieval war strategy.

A siege began with the felling of the surrounding fields and the sending of small numbers of troops to communication points in order to control the possible arrival of reinforcements. Usually, an attempt was made to obtain the surrender of the town through famine and thirst. To besiege a city with not very numerous armies meant almost necessarily a long-lasting siege. Hence, the state of the walls and other defences and the water and food supply represented a decisive factor for the resistance of the besieged. Moreover, the besiegers had to cut off all supplies and support for the town under siege, which sometimes involved the conquest of other minor surrounding towns.

Another tactic was to build strongholds, *husun*, from where attacks on the besieged fortress were launched and communications and supplies blocked (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Aguilar 1997: 192–206; Marín 1999: 193–225).

However, on many occasions assaults were undertaken, especially through the use of ladders. Andalusi armies had a special corps, named *naqqab*, which undertook picking works in order to open a breach in the walls. For instance, in the siege by the Zaragoza *taifa* king al-Muqtadir against Barbastro (1065), a sapper unit dug the wall of the fortress in order to stick large wooden logs inside and set them on fire and thus cause the collapse of the defences. Moreover, to knock gates down powerful battering rams, *kabsh*, were used. Also extremely useful were specialized archer squads present in the Islamic armies of all periods, such as, for instance, in the Almohad army. These could throw incendiary projectiles inside the enclosed area, which had not only a physical, but also a demoralizing effect. Finally, the sources also speak of the use of war engines, such as mangonels, *manjaniq*, and catapults, *ʿarrada* or *raʿada* (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Aguilar 1997: 192–206; Marín 1999: 193–225).

Pitched battles

Pitched battles were the least frequent kind of war action in Iberian Medieval history, mainly due to the high cost they entailed for the different peninsular powers. Yet, paradoxically, it is the kind of military strategy we have the most information on due to the emphasis placed by the different chroniclers on the great battles that occurred.

Andalusi armies always sought to offer battle on open terrain, which was more favourable for their light cavalry tactics and for the ample deployment required by so large an army. Enemies were enticed to an even zone in order to have more field to fight on and to more easily deploy and manoeuvre. After establishing contact with the enemy, tradition apparently required that paladins, *humat*, and champions, *batal*, encounter first. Regularly, however, cavalry charges were followed by sudden withdrawals, the typical light cavalry *karr wa farr* (see Glossary) or *tornafuye* (‘turn to attack-and-flee’) (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Chalmeta 1988: 33–42; García Fitz 1998: 386–398; Viguera 2001: 17–60).

Al-Turtushi has provided us with a detailed description of the way Islamic armies fought in his *Mirror for Princes*, *Siraj al-Muluk*, written in the late 11th century: the infantry, with their shields, spears and javelins, formed in several lines, *saff*, kneeling on the ground and leaning their spears upon their

shoulders towards the enemy with their shields up in the air. Behind them stood the archers, who could pierce the coats of mail of the enemy cavalry with their arrows. The cavalry was deployed last. When the enemy charged, the infantry had to stand fast in their positions and stop them with their spears and javelins, while the archers had to shoot their arrows. After containing the first part of the charge, both lines had to open to yield way for the cavalry to charge against the enemy. Something similar is described by sources on the Almohad tactics when referring to their victory over the Almoravids in the Battle of Mindas (1144). Al-Turtushi also advised the placing of the strongest troops in the middle, in order to keep the centre of the army intact should the wings break. In this sense, in the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212), the bulk of the troops, those closest to the caliph, was positioned in the middle of the deployment. The Christian mercenaries also had the role of creating a solid nucleus to provide shelter against enemy attacks. In turn, the role of the general in chief consisted of observing and sending auxiliary troops wherever necessary (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Arié 1984: 142–148; Chalmeta 1988: 33–42; Viguera 2001: 17–60; García Fitz 2012: 475–536).

Shooting power was always a feature of Andalusi armies. Thus, the function of both on-foot and mounted archers was extremely important in pitched battles. Almanzor, for example, carried 20,000 arrows in his campaign in 1002. Likewise, Kurdish troops also played an important role in the Almohad army. Armed with a composite bow, they shot without ever having to unhorse. This allowed them to surround their enemies, should these stand fast on the ground, and riddle them with their arrows at a prudential distance, or to withdraw upon the charge of the heavy feudal cavalry. Another feature was their great capability to make quick enveloping moves, which combined extremely well with the great mobility of the mounts and with Andalusi and Maghrebi arms, to provide swiftness in their onsets and charges. This manoeuvring ability was reflected especially in the North African hosts, as was the case with the Almoravids in the Battle of Zalaca (1086).

Berber warfare techniques began to prevail, especially after the Cordova caliphate disintegrated. For instance, in the Battle of ʻAqabat al-Baqar (1010), one of the pretenders to the caliphal throne positioned himself in the rearguard, surrounded by Maghrebi knights ordered to stand fast in their position. When the Franks, allied to the second pretender, charged with their heavy cavalry, the Berbers pretended to flee with the purpose of letting them advance and then encircling them from behind. However, they occasionally also resorted to frontal attack, at which time kettledrums deafened and flags were unfolded in order to disconcert the enemy. Here, especially since the 12th and 13th centuries, Andalusi troops played an important role, for they had adopted a great deal of the heavy panoply of the Christian knights and could

act as armoured cavalry and launch powerful charges (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Arié 1984: 142–148; Chalmeta 1988: 33–42; Marín 1999: 193–225; Viguera 2001: 17–60; García Fitz 2012: 475–536).

Logistics, supplies and funding

Throughout the Andalusi period, the army, as the centralized institution it was, was financed through the taxes collected. On many occasions, special taxes were applied for the financing of the armies, as, for instance, in the *taifa* period as a result of increasing pressure by the Christian kingdoms. Another means of obtaining funding to maintain military activity was the income provided by war itself: the booty, *ghanima* (see Glossary). This fed the state by means of the 'fifth', *khums*, which was reserved for the ruler and, at the same time, also financed in-campaign needs. Donations given by believers to carry out the *jihad* were another financing method (Chalmeta 1988: 33–42; Aguilar 1997: 192–206; Marín 1999: 193–225; Viguera 2001: 17–60; García Fitz 2012: 359–388).

Military payments were controlled by the aforementioned *diwan*. Both the regular pay and certain extraordinary stipends appear in this register of troops. An example of the latter is the *baraka*, 'grace', given out by the Almohad caliphs both before and after major expeditions. Moreover, it seems that, at least permanently, land concessions, *iqta'*, were not institutionalized as payment methods. In addition to these payments, in certain periods coins were distributed on occasion of the rise of a new ruler, as occurred, for instance, on the occasion of the acknowledgement of the son of Yusuf b. Tashufin, 'Ali, as his successor. The troops also had a right to accommodation, *manazil*, to rations, *nafaqa*, and to fodder for their mounts, *'ulufa*. They also had to be provided with projectiles. In turn, each soldier had to show up with his own equipment (mount, harness and offensive and defensive weapons). In addition, the military structure had personnel responsible for weapons, *khidmat al-asliha*, for the payment of salaries, or for supply and accommodation, etc. (Chalmeta 1988: 33–42; Aguilar 1997: 192–206; Marín 1999: 193–225; Viguera 2001: 17–60; García Fitz 2012: 359–388).

During expeditions, each knight was accompanied in the marching column by a squire, who drove a beast of burden, a horse or a pack animal, which carried his luggage, including a camping tent for himself and for his servant, his defensive weapons and his projectiles. The Umayyad army had camels to carry heavy material. In the times of Almanzor, in the period between different

campaigns, up to 3,900 camels were gathered in the steppe region of the province of Murcia. However, wagons are not mentioned, although this means of transportation was in common use in the 10th-century Christian kingdoms. Up to 100 mules were needed to carry mills, with which the bread that was later given to the troops was made. Furthermore, the palanquins of the women that accompanied the combatants, termed *al-nisa' al-ghazawi*, also marched in this column. Naturally, the impedimenta and the escort were part of the rearguard in the marching formation.

Likewise, attention was paid to the condition of the thoroughfares: roads, fords or bridges were repaired, adapted or reinforced to guarantee the successful passing of the troops. It is possible that there was somebody responsible in the army for the coordination of all these operations during the march.

In-campaign supplies depended on the resources found in the terrain during the expedition. In some armies, such as that of the Zirids of the *taifa* kingdom of Granada, the existence of a consignment for the acquisition of in-campaign supplies has been verified. Troops were accommodated on the open field or occupied the dwellings of the civil population. In the case of the Almohads, they had a network of pre-established places along their routes, furnished with points of water and food supplies and lodgings, in which the armies rested during marches. In order to facilitate the march, the contingent was divided into four bodies, each one assigned a date and place in the water supply (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Marín 1999: 193–225; García Fitz 2012: 359–388).

In addition, the acquisition and provisioning of horses was essential, since knights formed the majority of the troops. Upon the arrival of the Almoravid army prior to the Battle of Zalaca, Andalusi rulers were responsible for supplies and all the impedimenta necessary for the mounts. In turn, towards the late 10th century, Almanzor had used the islands of the Guadalquivir River, south of Seville, as a breeding place for these animals for the army. At Denia and in Mallorca, horses were also bred for military purposes. In Mallorca, the *taifa* king Mujahid had established a record of thoroughbred mares, whose foals were expropriated for an indemnity as soon as they were able to be ridden (Aguilar 1997: 192–206; Marín 1999: 193–225).

Armament

As has already been mentioned, horsemen predominated in the Andalusi armies, a feature that was reinforced with the incorporation of North African

troops in the late 10th century. Infantry was relegated to sieges, to large undertakings and to the defence of castles and fortresses. Archaeological, textual and iconographic sources, which, although scarce, include some information on the armament of the Andalusi soldiers, offer interesting data with which it is possible to sketch a general overview of the subject.

As for offensive armament, chronicles attest, for instance, to the use of different types of swords: Christian or Frank swords, large and wide double-edged swords suitable to strike and cut with, which followed Carolingian models; Indian swords, the name of which could refer rather to a special technique of tempering metal than to its provenance; or luxury swords documented for solemn occasions such as military parades. Besides swords, spears were another very common offensive weapon. The natural function of the spear, as a projectile, often used by light cavalry, is documented on several occasions by Islamic sources. Later, graspable spears were used. In addition, the choice between sword and spear might have varied between tribes: according to Ibn Darraj, *Zanata* Berbers armed themselves with swords, whereas the *Sanhaja* did so with spears (Soler 1991; Marín 1999: 193–225).

As for bows, in the Umayyad period the use of composite bows, along with the universal simple bow, is documented. They presented great advantages, such as their greater tension, since their wood was reinforced with deer and goat tendon and horn. The *Cordova Calendar* shows that in the month of June, provincial administrators had to collect deer and goat horns for the manufacture of these bows. The wood used in the best bows was yew, because of its greater flexibility. Both materials were shipped to Cordova, whose arsenal, according to Ibn Hayyan, produced 12,000 units. Al-Razi also reflects on two sizes of bows: a larger one, which could be of a simple kind and was destined for the infantry, and a smaller one, a composite one and destined for light cavalry. This weapon would be closely related to the *tornafuye* type of combat. Moreover, it is possible that the so-called Christian or *infranshiyya* bows are related to incipient models of crossbows (Soler 1991).

As for defensive armament, the commonest was the shield. Sources differentiate between *turs* and *daraqa*, but do not offer further data. In the 14th century, Ibn Hudhayl mentioned that the *turs* was round-shaped and the *daraqa* made of leather, although his testimony cannot be extrapolated to the entire Andalusi period, since in his time a *daraqa* (adarga) was understood as a kind of bivalve shield made of leather which had been introduced in the 13th century. The difference must have concerned construction rather than shape: the *daraqa* was made, according to the *Muqtabis*, either from well-hardened leather, or from antelope hide in the case of luxury units. The *turs*, instead, was made on a wooden structure, but never on a metallic one.

FIGURE 1.2 Mounted archer with composite bow. *Beato* manuscript, 10th century. (Creative Commons)

As for annular defences, use of coat of mails, *dar' hasina*, in the eastern Islamic world has been known since the very beginning. In Andalusi sources, officials of the caliphal army and the palatine guard, both infantry and cavalry contingents, are mentioned as using them. That is to say, they were possibly used in the Umayyad period only by elite corps. Al-Razi on several occasions cites mailed knights with spears. Among them were the *khamsiyyin*, mailed squads with helmets, possibly mercenaries. These also included the mailed *tanjiyyin*, who would have entered the service of 'Abd al-Rahman III, or the *'abid*, infantry with bows, coat of mail (*loriga* in sources) and helmets. There was also the presence of bodily defences made from small pieces in the shape of overlapping scales. They were known and used in the Visigothic period, so their presence in the Umayyad period must not be discarded. Moreover, the only type of helmet documented in the 10th century corresponds to conic models with a Visigothic legacy. A similar type could have been the *bayda*

mentioned in Andalusi sources, i.e. a type of small helmet which only covered the top of the head. In the *taifa* period, what covered the top of the head was the *hashir*, and a coat of mail, called *mighfar*, would be added to this (Arié 1984: 137–142; Soler 1991; Marín 1999: 193–225).

In the 12th and 13th centuries, a change occurred in the models due to influence from the continental armament adopted in the Christian kingdoms, which coexisted with the Muslim tradition and revaluation thanks to the arrival of new African contingents. Firstly, Christian heavy cavalry usage was adopted, with bridle horse riding, a tree on the saddles, bodily defences and spear under the armpit. In addition, certain novelties were introduced from Maghreb, such as the *adargas* with their bivalve shape, or the African saddle, with a much shorter pommel and cantle than the Andalusi. In any event, light cavalry still prevailed over the heavy, something which can be seen in the Almohad period (Arié 1984: 137–142; Soler 1991; Viguera 2001: 17–60).

The most common type of mount was, as may be expected, the horse. We have already seen how, due to its importance, the different powers created diverse mechanisms in order to secure their obtainment. However, mules were also used and, of course, camels. The Almoravids, for instance, accomplished their first conquests riding on camels, but, upon their arrival into al-Andalus, the horse became their usual beast of war (Arié 1984: 137–142; Aguilar 1997: 192–206; Viguera 2001: 17–60).

Fortifications

Fortifications constituted the most palpable expression of territorial domination in the Middle Ages, as the control of a region was only feasible by means of the building, occupation or destruction of its castles. Many historians have spoken of the existence in the Iberian Peninsula, on either side of the Christian–Muslim frontier, of a defensive line formed by the interaction of a very diverse set of strongholds. However, it seems that such an interconnection never existed, at least on a strictly warlike level. Apparently, there never was an operative link between the different elements of the system that allowed, when necessary, a coordinated defence of the frontier. In the case of small incursions, it seems that that alleged line proved ineffective simply due to the limited response time. In the case of larger expeditions, in order that a garrison or a number of garrisons relatively close to one another had a minimal chance to stop them, it would have been necessary that they abandoned the protection of their walls and tackled the attackers on open field. This required, at least, a

sufficient number of forces to confront the components of a large army, which, of course, was not that common (García Fitz 1998: 177–214).

Therefore, fortifications were erected to defend a territory, among other functions, but not in the sense to contain the invading army nor to differ or to stop its advance, but to protect both the surrounding population and the goods they were able to bring inside. That is to say, they had a passive defensive function. A minimum of walls and supplies gave the defenders a great advantage over the attackers. The role played by the surveillance and information system was also essential for the population to reach safety on time. In addition, as already mentioned, the control of a space necessarily required dominating and annexing its fortresses. Thus, the defence of the control of a territory mainly depended on the maintenance of the latter. It is from this perspective that the agglomeration of strongholds over a given territory makes sense (García Fitz 1998: 177–214).

The Andalusi territory was fortified with diverse types of buildings: *burj*, tower, *hisn*, castle, *qal'a*, stronghold, *qasaba*/*alcazaba*, fortress *qasr*/*alcazar*, citadel, etc. Castles are complex architectonic structures with walls that encircle a space and form an enclosure, where various towers rise every now and then. An *alcazaba*, in turn, is a defensive element clearly related to a city. Like an acropolis, it is the residence of the political power and may even be used as a palace, *qasr*. Towers are defensive elements that are usually situated around one or several minor towns, *al-qaria*. They could host a small garrison, usually had a rectangular or square ground plan and were built with mud wall. Unlike towers, watchtowers were situated at high locations and were used to guard passages and routes (Viguera 2001: 17–60; Malpica 2002).

Andalusi fortifications can also be analysed according to their promoters. They could respond to the presence of the state, to the needs of the autonomous communities and to the interests of certain social groups. As for state fortifications, rectangular ground plans predominate, something that would continue for a long time as a characteristic of the Umayyad dynasty. As for building techniques, stone wrought into blocks stands out, a technique copied by their enemies, as may be seen at Bobastro. The *hisn* was ruled by the governor, *qa'id*, who could be appointed by the nearest rural communities, but was certainly acknowledged by Cordova. In the emiral period, many *husun*-refuges (sing. *hisn*) were erected to defend the territory from the frequent rebellions, a system which was not only fostered by the central power, but also by local communities, as may be observed at Pechina (Almería), where a belt of castles was created to defend them from Granada Arab rebels. Another example of a rural community *hisn*, an extremely elaborate one in this case, is the fortress of Bezmiliana. It was built using masonry and with a polygonal ground plan, and was perfectly adapted to the terrain. It also had small

rectangular towers on each corner, and one access. Some also followed the state model of a square ground plan with cubes at the corners, built with mud wall instead of stone blocks, which made them much more costly. An example is the Alora *hisn* (Acién 1995: 7–36).

In order to defend its cities against exterior enemies or rebellions, the central power constructed an *alcazaba* or *qasr* at one end of the city with the aim of controlling the main access to the city, as in Mérida, Toledo and Seville. Normally, these were rectangular ground plan fortresses, with square towers on the corners and rectangular towers with short projections on their walls, and the main entrance, with direct access, beside one of those towers (Acién 1995: 7–36).

However, the central power and the local communities were not the only institutions that invested in the construction of fortresses and, therefore, in defence. For instance, the great frontier lineages and rebel groups of the late 9th century built huge fortresses that had *alcazabas*, outskirts, religious buildings or palaces and ended up replacing the primitive local *husun*-refuges (Acién 1995: 7–36).

FIGURE 1.3 Umayyad caliphal fortress of Gormaz. (Creative Commons)

Upon the disintegration of the Umayyad caliphate at Cordova in the 11th century, a new period began in which tensions and rivalries between the different powers led to a preponderance of the military and, hence, of fortifications. There were works of an emblematic nature, related to everything concerning the palace and legitimation, and frontier-type works multiplied in line with the new territorial divisions, among which the old local *husun*-

refuges gained in value. In the most emblematic cases, such as the Aljafería at Zaragoza, the stone blocks and the caliphal square ground plan was maintained, but the Aljafería had round towers, which have been linked to the eastern Umayyad caliphate. Furthermore, in a situation of territorial loss, fortification works were ever more necessary and financing had to be sought. The Almoravids, for instance, imposed a tax for the building of walls. These were executed at Almería, Cordova, Seville and Niebla. The last of these, the best preserved one, was built around 1130 with mud wall, with a perimeter of about two kilometres and 50 rectangular ground plan towers, plus two octagonal towers. In five of them bent-entrance gates were present.

Very similar was the precinct of Jerez, which also had *albarrana* (flanking) towers. The Almohads also carried out numerous fortification works, mainly for two reasons: Christian pressure and imperial propaganda. They used preferably mud wall, polygonal towers with connected stone blocks on the corners proliferated, and *albarrana* towers and *corachas*, reinforcement walls, were developed, as in Calatrava (Acién 1995: 7–36).

Finally, during the entire period under consideration, it is worth also highlighting the coastal defence. Because of the geographic condition of the Iberian Peninsula and of al-Andalus in particular, this was extremely necessary. Since the mid-9th-century Viking attacks, anchorages and ports had been fortified and dockyards created. In addition, lookout towers and watchtowers, *tali'a*, *manazir*, *burj* or *maharis*, proliferated, which could send signals during the night, as well as *ribats*, frequented by *jihad* volunteers. These constructions were financed by the central power, local communities or, as in most *ribats*, mere volunteers (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Viguera 2001: 17–60).

FIGURE 1.4 Almohad *albarrana* tower in Cáceres. (Creative Commons)

Naval warfare

The considerable extension of its coastline left al-Andalus vulnerable to pirate incursions or attacks and landings of enemy forces. Hence, the Umayyad sovereigns soon took care to have a war fleet. This need flourished especially after the Normand attacks that took place under ʿAbd al-Rahman II and Muhammad I, the most famous Viking incursion being that of Seville in 844. Later, with the establishment of the Fatimid caliphate in the early 10th century, the risk of a naval attack increased.

Initially, the Andalusi military interest in the sea took the shape of piratical warfare, tolerated by the Umayyad sovereigns. Ships sailed out of the ports of the Iberian Levant to undertake small plundering actions upon the coasts of Provence and Italy. In this regard, towards the end of the 8th century, Charlemagne took a number of measures aimed at suppressing the incursions of Muslim pirates on the coasts of Narbonne and Septimania, as well as on the Italian coastline up to Rome. Furthermore, in the year 831 a group of Andalusi mariners joined the Aghlabid naval force in the seizing of Palermo. In the 9th century the sources begin to speak of squads, *asatil* (sing. *ustul*), armed by the Andalusi central government. In addition, the chronicles teach us that ʿAbd al-Rahman III, at the beginning of his reign, placed light fleets in the Strait to prevent Ibn Hafsun from receiving supplies from North Africa. However, the

most important landmark in the history of the Andalusi Umayyad navy was the foundation in the year 884 of the town of Pechina (Almería), which would later become the main Umayyad naval base. The general quarters of the admirals, *qa'id al-bahr* or *ra'is ustul al-sultan*, were established there, among which, under the government of al-Hakam II and Hisham II, was the famous ʿAbd al-Rahman Ibn al-Rumahis, who was also the ruler of Pechina and Elvira. This was the apogee of the Umayyad navy. Still with al-Hakam II on the caliphal throne, a Viking fleet was chased as far as Silves, where it was decimated, with Almanzor naval squads engaged in combat in support of the incursions towards the Catalan and Galician coastline (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Arié 1984: 152–161; Viguera 2001: 17–60).

The fleet was composed of oar-and-sail ships, but these were never described in great detail by the chroniclers. According to Ibn Khaldun, the fleet under ʿAbd al-Rahman III amounted to 200 ships. Each ship was commanded by one *qa'id*, who was in charge of everything concerning armament and military power, whereas the other officer, called *ra'is*, took charge of the sailing, either by sail or by oar, and led the anchoring manoeuvres. Besides Pechina, other Andalusi ports on the coast were also somewhat important naval bases, with shipyards, *dar al-insha'*, *dar sinaʿat al-marakib*, or simply *dar al-sinaʿa*, dockyards. This was the case with Alcacer do Sal, Silves, Seville, Algeciras, Malaga, Alicante and Denia (Lévi-Provençal 1982: 31–65; Viguera 2001: 17–60).

Of course, naval power declined during the *taifa* period. Most of the war fleet known of in the *taifa* period is that assembled by King Mujahid of Denia (d. 1045) for the conquest of Sardinia, namely 120 ships. Abu Kharrub was its *ra'is al-bahriyyin*, admiral. Ibn Darraj, who dedicated a poem to Mujahid's maritime power, suggested that each ship was manned by archer units. Furthermore, the Seville *taifa* kings maintained a certain maritime military activity and in 1064–1065 they attacked Ceuta with a fleet of 80 ships. For his part, al-ʿUdhri (d. 1085) mentioned dockyards for military purposes at Almería. Thus, the naval importance of this region must have continued (Marín 1999: 193–225).

For the North African empires, the fleet was an extremely useful element to control the crossing of the Strait and to connect their Maghrebi territories with their Andalusi ones. The Almoravids had no naval experience, and so, in his first maritime expedition against Suqut al-Barwati of Ceuta in 1083, Yusuf b. Tashufin had to borrow Andalusi ships. However, this situation was quickly solved, as may be inferred from the later conquest of the Balearic Islands by the Almoravid fleet. With the Almohads, naval power increased. In the year 1162, ʿAbd al-Mu'min built squadrons on the coasts of his empire, and equipped 80 ships in al-Andalus. Despite this, the Almohads never dared to

intercept Christian fleets, which crossed the Strait without problems (Arié 1984: 152–161; Aguilar 1997: 192–206).

Ideology of war

War, as a phenomenon of institutionalized violence, was an essential part of Medieval societies. To justify it, each cultural tradition used different discourses, among which the religious one soon played a key role. Indeed, in the dominant structure of thought there was no room for a division between religion and politics. In Islam, it was the notion of *jihad* that gave an ideological framework to war.

The term *jihad* derives from the triliteral root *j-h-d*, which literally means 'to make an effort'. It is the personal effort to contain an evil that usually derives from one of three sources: a visible enemy, a demon, or an aspect of oneself. *Jihad* occurs 36 times in the Qur'an, but only in 10 of them refers to a war act if we judge from strictly linguistic criteria, without resorting to exegesis. Therefore, as may be seen, there are numerous kinds of *jihad*, and some of them have nothing to do with war. In any case, given the objective of this study, here focus is on its warlike aspect. In this sense, the earliest definitions of *jihad* come from jurists. One example is the following definition by al-Shafi'i (d. 820): 'That is to say that the *jihad* is a type of departure for battle by which it is sought to exalt the word of God, be He praised, to demonstrate His religion, to suppress His enemies thereby, the polytheists, and to achieve the reward that God and His Prophet promised to whomever fought the *jihad* in His cause'.

Furthermore, an idea of *jihad* was developed which placed on the sovereign the burden of the holy war, the mandate to intervene on the frontier, which was complemented with the literary image of the 'warrior-caliph', materialized especially in the figure of the Abbasid caliph Harun al-Rashid (d. 809). The caliph, a successor of the prophet Muhammad, appeared as the only adequate person to make a call to holy war, to *jihad* in the path of God. The *jihad* was construed as a collective duty, the fulfilment of which by a few exempted the rest of the Muslims. However, when it was done in defence of the Islamic territory, it became an individual duty, which was obligatory for all Muslims capable of it. In this context of caliphal expansionism, the duality *dar al-islam* and *dar al-harb*, i.e. the juridical and conceptual existence of a frontier, also appeared. Islamic juridical science was built upon the idea of a single Islamic state, which would become the territory of *dar al-islam* and would

consequently be at permanent war with the exterior, a territory where no Islamic law would reign: the *dar al-harb* (Booney 2004: 70ff).

Another interesting development of the doctrine of *jihad* is the difference between *al-jihad al-akbar* and *al-jihad al-asghar*, major and minor *jihad* respectively. The core idea here is that the Prophet would always give priority to the major *jihad*, which consisted of the fight against one's own passions, the personal effort to be a good Muslim, and which, in turn, would be the most difficult to accomplish. Apparently, this idea appeared first in the 8th century in contexts of ascetic – and warlike – scholars who preached on the importance of combat against the lower passions and desires, without mentioning, though, the difference between major and minor *jihad*. The formulation of this set of terms would not arrive until the late 11th century, with al-Ghazali (d. 1111).

In al-Andalus, a frontier for eight centuries, the different Islamic powers also used the doctrine of the *jihad* to legitimize a great deal of their war actions against the Christian kingdoms, and even against other rival Muslims. The chronicles portrayed the Umayyad sovereign, 'Abd al-Rahman III in particular, as a warrior-sovereign, as a 'ghazi-caliph' following the Abbasid model, as a ruler who personally led the expeditions, as the Prophet did on numerous occasions. In the parts of Ibn Hayyan's work devoted to the period of caliphal Cordova, the term *jihad* is seldom used, reserved for certain circumstances, but always associated to the caliph's capacity to lead holy war. The term is connected not only to propagandistic passages concerning the person of the sovereign, such as letters encouraging the fight against infidels and heretics, but also to circumstances like the departure to the fight of volunteers in the path of God. It is used as a means of dramatizing an exceptional moment of fighting against the enemies of Islam, in a kind of account different from mere military speech. In the Simancas campaign (939), for instance, Ibn Hayyan, following Ibn Futays' *Kitab al-Fath*, tells us how 'Abd al-Rahman III led the Umayyad army against the enemies of God to teach them that the word of Allah is the truth (De la Puente 1999: 23–38).

But doubtlessly, if anybody represented the figure of ruler-warrior in caliphal Cordova, that was Ibn Abi 'Amir al-Mansur (d. 392/1002), known in Christian sources as Almanzor. The *hajib* of caliph Hisham II conducted more than 50 expeditions against Christian territories, including one to Santiago de Compostela, and was buried wearing his combat clothing. In contrast to the period of the Umayyad caliph al-Hakam II, who did not lead any military campaigns, Almanzor incarnated the figure of the military commander. He symbolized the spirit of the *jihad*, which he used as a basis for his legitimacy. He justified his government before his subjects by becoming the standard-bearer for the holy war and the defender of orthodoxy. The historian al-

Humaydi (d. 1095) stated that he did not reside in Cordova because he was concerned with the *jihad*, leading *razzias* against the Christians, to such an extent that he would go out to pray on a holy day and instead of returning to his palace would set out for war (De la Puente 2011: 7–21).

While such a centralized and caliphal *jihad*, led from Cordova by the Umayyad rulers or their delegates, was being developed and constructed, a different one was being conceived at the frontier. Rather, it was of a peripheral character and truly autonomous from the state's authority. It partook of a marked asceticism, and can easily be traced, particularly after the fall of the Cordova caliphate. To begin with, early Maghrebi Maliki scholars, such as Sahnun (d. 856), who took part in the numerous *ribats* that proliferated in northern Africa in its condition as a maritime frontier, claimed that the *jihad* was an individual obligation. In all likelihood, these ideas arrived in al-Andalus, as did the *Kitab al-Jihad* by Ibn al-Mubarak, who also considered that the *jihad* was an individual duty and who, by the way, excelled for his combination of spiritual, ascetic and martial practices. The presence of numerous pious peoples retired to do *ribat* and to participate in the *jihad* is documented, one of these being Ibn Tahir al-Qaysi, who was a *mujahid* with Almanzor, who was by his side during the conquest of Zamora and Coimbra, and died during an incursion into Astorga towards the end of the 10th century.

Moreover, the Almoravids also justified some of their actions, most notably their entry into al-Andalus, through *jihad*. They, the inhabitants of the *ribat*, were the only ones capable of conducting a victorious *jihad* against the advance of the Christian north and, thus, of defending the frontiers of Islam. Therefore, it was they who had to rule and lead the Muslims into the Andalusi territory. This idea was reinforced thanks to such victories as that at Zalaca against the Castilians in the year 1086. However, if there ever was a moment in which the discourse of the *jihad* rose as the main instrument of power legitimation, that was the Almohad period. Two of the axes that expressed the Almohad phenomenon were its referring to the beginnings of Islam, to that period viewed as a model worth returning to, and its heavy use of *jihad* as a source of legitimation and justification.

The *jihad* was proclaimed from the very beginning against the Almoravids, who were denied their condition of true believers. *Jihad* had to be conducted against all those that did not accept the Almohad vision of Islam, the only true one. It was soon extended to the Christians, especially after the Ifriqiyya campaign carried out by ʿAbd al-Mu'min in the year 1158, when the caliph directly confronted a Christian power, that of the Normands, whom he took Mahdiyya from. Two years later, in 1160, ʿAbd al-Mu'min crossed the Strait of Gibraltar announcing, during the festival of the Sacrifice, the next *jihad* against the Christians. This is how the figure of the 'ghazi-caliph', the

sovereign personally leading the *jihad* against the enemies of God, reappeared, something the Almohad state would place great store on through means such as carefully planned parades. The official propaganda also emphasized this notion to the point that, for example, letters were sent in the name of caliphs to the capitals of the empire to announce victories over the infidels (*kutub al-fath*), and publicly read in the most important mosques. Works on *jihad* were also composed at the express request of the Almohad authorities, as is the case of Ibn al-Munasif (d. 1223), cadi of Valencia and Murcia. In the introduction to this work, commissioned by the governor of Valencia, who was none other than the youngest son of the caliph ʻAbd al-Mu'min, the author explained the reason why he composed it: so as to fulfil the noblest of obligations and the best way to subordinate to God, namely *jihad* against the enemies of God (Albarrán 2017: 279–306).

Hence, the *jihad* was undoubtedly a basic pillar of the Almohad project and one of their axes of legitimization, as already stated. This reality can be clearly observed in the growing connection and interchange between religiosity and war, between religion and violence, particularly against the infidel, a phenomenon that is well illustrated, for instance, with an increase in ritualism and religiousness in campaigns through sermons and speeches. It may also be seen in the insistence on *jihad* in the epigraphs of the *mihrabs* of the Kutubiyya and of the mosque of the Qasba in Marrakech (Q. 22:77–78) and on the inscription of the door *alfiz* of the Qasba in Rabat (Q. 51:10–12) (Albarrán 2017: 279–306).

Main campaigns

(For the Almoravid and Almohad battles of Zalaca, Alarcos and Las Navas de Tolosa, see Chapter 3.)

The campaign of Muez

The campaign of Muez was one of the many attrition incursions that the Cordova emirate, in this case ʻAbd al-Rahman III, launched towards the Christian territory of the peninsular north. The operation was conceived as a holy war and, in several letters sent to win over volunteers, the *jihad* character of the incursion and the presence of the Umayyad sovereign leading it was emphasized. After the display of troops, *buruz*, which must have taken place in

early May, the emir left Cordova on 4 June 920 to lead an expedition as punishment for the Muslim defeat by the Navarran-Leonese coalition in the Battle of Castromoros. He stopped at Guadalajara to solve certain problems that had arisen with the frontier lord of the region, something usual in these campaigns. Later, after sending his vanguard towards Aragon to make the enemy believe their target was a different one, he took the towns of Osma, Gormaz and Calahorra, and finally stopped at Tudela, where frontier troops joined. Finally, the Cordovan army headed for the capital of the Navarran kingdom, Pamplona (Cañada Juste 1985: 117–143; Fierro 2011: 50–51).

The king of Pamplona, Sancho Garcés I (d. 925), awaited inside Arnedo, but, on seeing that the Muslim troops, after taking Calahorra, headed for the capital, rushed northwards to join his troops with those of Ordoño II of Leon (d. 924), who came to help. The caliphal army marched on to Viguera, where they defeated the first joint Christian forces, finally arriving at Muez, in the Junquera Valley, a region about 25 kilometres south-west of Pamplona. It must be said that not all authors who have carried out research into this campaign agree on the location (Cañada Juste 1985: 117–143; Fierro 2011: 50–51).

The Battle of Valdejunquera or of Muez was waged on 26 July between the army of the Cordova emir and that formed by the forces of the Leonese and Navarran kings. Deep in the valley, the emir ordered the pitching of camp and engagement in combat. The Christian army's error was to offer battle on open field, a circumstance in which the numeric superiority of the Muslim army and its light cavalry was indisputable. The Navarran-Leonese troops were resoundingly defeated and the bishops of Tuy and Salamanca were captured, while the survivors of the Christian army sought refuge in the fortresses of Muez and Viguera, besieged immediately by the Andalusi emir. After taking the towns through surrender by thirst of the besieged, all captives, according to the chronicles, had their throats slit and the region was devastated for a month. In the latter half of August 'Abd al-Rahman's army began its return to Cordova. On the way to the Umayyad capital, where they would arrive on 31 July, the emir stopped at Atienza, where he distributed clothes and mounts to the frontier people who had fought with him (Cañada Juste 1985: 117–143; Fierro 2011: 50–51).

The battle(s) of Simancas and al-Khandaq

The expedition that the caliph 'Abd al-Rahman III sent against Ramiro II of Leon (d. 951) in the summertime of year 939 received the name of *Ghazwat al-Qudra*, the 'campaign of power'. Hence, some others have suggested that this

campaign had not been a mere attrition incursion like the others, but an operation destined to subject the Christian power. Regardless of what the purpose was, it was necessary to gather the largest army possible at the northern frontier. The campaign was announced by resorting to *jihad* and eschatology, calling the army *hashr*, i.e. the eschatological congregation of the final days. In July, large contingents that had arrived from several military circumscriptions had already arrived and, when the bulk of the troops was concentrated at the frontier, other army corps joined, probably the best or most professional contingents. For his part, ʿAbd al-Rahman III concentrated in Cordova with the Andalusi cavalry and with his personal guard, and in Toledo some frontier lords joined him. The fact is that the caliphal army, between *jund, hushud* and volunteers, must have been extremely large in number. Chroniclers state that a huge number of pack animals were needed to carry all the equipment and weapons. Sources estimate the Andalusi forces at about 100,000, whereas modern researchers set their number between 12,000 and 50,000 (Fierro 2011: 52–61).

The main target was apparently the fortress of Simancas, a location in today's province of Valladolid, or at least this represented the first phase of the campaign. It was key to controlling the middle Duero River, where a road passed that was essential to reaching the peninsular north. It was, besides, the advanced and vanguard point of Leon and Zamora. Once conquered or destroyed, it would be easier to make incursions towards the north.

Having arrived at the gates of Simancas on 6 August, the lord of Zaragoza, Muhammad b. Hashim al-Tujibi, who would, along with other frontier lords, form the vanguard of the Cordova army, the *muqaddama*, charged against the Christian troops of Ramiro II of Leon, that had formed on the plain in front of the fortress. Initially, the Christian troops withdrew into the city, but later countercharged and captured the frontier lord. The Leonese had managed not to let the Andalusi army exercise its superiority on open field. On the third day Christian reinforcements arrived from places like Alava and Castile. The caliph then ordered the Muslims to get ready for combat under their standards. The combat went on until the Andalusi forces were defeated on 9 August. Possibly, the Christians had an approximate knowledge of the direction of the expedition. Hence, they asked the Castilians, Navarrans and Galicians for help, who would have been placed at the most expected points and for whom it would have taken only three days to arrive at the battle-place thanks to the information provided by an espionage system that existed on both sides (Manzano 1991: 361–364).

According to sources, the fleeing caliphal troops were pushed over a cliff by the persecuting Christian army, where they were decimated. The caliph fled and left behind his entire equipment, including his coat of mail and his

personal Qur'an. Later, he would head for Guadalajara. As for the second encounter in the midst of the flight, an important historiographic debate has arisen. Islamic sources call it Alhandega, *al-Khandaq* or *al-Khanadiq*, i.e. the battle of the ditch or of the cliffs. Whereas many historians place it somewhere on the route followed by 'Abd al-Rahman III's army from Simancas when fleeing through the lands of Valladolid, Burgos, Segovia, Soria and Guadalajara, others place it in Salamanca, in the namesake location that stood on the Alhándiga River. Furthermore, other researchers, especially Maribel Fierro, have questioned the very existence of this second encounter by critically reading the sources. According to her, it must not be forgotten that the al-Khandaq battle was one of the famous victories of the prophet Muhammad over the pagans of Mecca, among which was Abu Sufyan, an ancestor of the Umayyad caliph. Therefore, this might have been propaganda against the ruler of Cordova, since Simancas would have been 'Abd al-Rahman III's al-Khandaq (Manzano 1991: 361–364; Fierro 2011: 52–61).

As it were, the failure of 'the campaign of power' led to an important change in the outcome of certain problems for the Cordova caliphate. According to several Islamic sources, those responsible for the defeat were some of the frontier lords, who left the battlefield headlong. Thus, a total disaffection of the peripheral powers towards Umayyad central power was shown, which inaugurated a period of greater autonomy for the former, in exchange for maintaining loyalty towards Cordova. In addition, this defeat meant the final point of the period of military chieftain which had made 'Abd al-Rahman III so successful. Never again would he lead his troops on a campaign.

Almanzor and the Santiago de Compostela campaign

The Santiago de Compostela campaign, led by Almanzor and his two sons, represented one of the deepest Cordovan incursions into Christian territory. Apparently, the objective of the campaign, as in the over 50 incursions Almanzor carried out, was not the conquest of new territories, but the attrition of the enemy and the control and securing of the frontier territories. In addition, this victory served Almanzor in his purpose of legitimizing the concentration of power he had *de facto* attained as ruler of Cordova, turning caliph Hisham II into a mere puppet. Triumphs against the infidel like this one presented him as a true champion of *jihad*.

On 3 July 997, Almanzor left Cordova, following an itinerary with his troops that would take him through Coria, Viseu, Oporto, Tuy and Iria, finally

arriving at Santiago de Compostela on 10 August. On his way he destroyed several castles and monasteries, such as those at San Payo, San Damián and San Cosme, an ordinary incident in these *ghazwa*s. Such marching speed was due to the fact that the Cordovan ranks were composed solely of cavalry, whereas infantry troops had previously travelled by boat from Alcacer do Sal to Oporto. As already mentioned in previous sections, the importance of the cavalry in the Andalusi armies was far superior to the on-foot troops. Almanzor also received help from some Christian leaders dissatisfied with the Leonese King Bermudo's performance, namely the Castilian counts and Froila González, Duke of Oporto and Governor of Coimbra, who allowed the Cordovan *hajib* access to the port city (De la Puente 2011: 7–21).

The city of Compostela, which had been abandoned by its inhabitants, was destroyed, as was its basilica, where, according to Christian sources, only the tomb of the apostle Santiago was respected, an incident interpreted as a miracle. The Umayyad army then continued its attrition expedition throughout the Galician region and, when it was finished, returned to Cordova with substantial booty which included the bells and doors of the basilica, which were rewrought into lamps and pieces for the ceiling of Cordova mosque. Without a doubt, the sack and destruction of one of the most important temples of Christianity was a hard symbolic blow, something already emphasized by Ibn Darraj in his panegyric poems about the Cordovan leader (De la Puente 2011: 7–21; Echevarría 2011: 156–157).

The sieges of Barbastro

In the context of the advance of the Christian kingdoms after the decomposition of the Umayyad caliphate in the mid-11th century, in the year 1063 Alexander II preached holy war against Barbastro, a Muslim community under the control of Yusuf Ibn Sulayman Ibn Hud al-Muzaffar (d. 1079), emir of Lerida. Troops from diverse regions responded to the call, among which were Franks, Normands, Burgundians, Aragonese and forces from the county of Urgel. It is possible that, among others, the Normand baron Robert Crespin took part in the enterprise, apparently called al-Bitubin in Arabic sources. The city was conquered in August 1064, after 40 days of siege.

Certain details of the siege are known to us thanks to the narratives of several contemporary Muslim chroniclers, including Ibn Hayyan. After starting the siege, the assailants seized the outskirt (*rabad*), where over 5,000 knights were involved. The defenders then fortified themselves inside the city, but thirst began to cause severe problems, so they had to offer surrender, accepted

by the Christian side. The resistance, however, stayed in the *alcazaba* or citadel several days, and finally surrendered as well. It can be seen how the siege, solved due to the lack of food of the besieged, went through three phases: the first, in which the assaulters seized the city outskirts; the second, in which they conquered the intramural city; and the third, in which they finished off the resistance in the *alcazaba*, the last bastion of every Islamic city. Barbastro therefore remained under the control of the king of Aragon Sancho Ramírez (d. 1094), who apparently handed it to his brother-in-law Ermengol III of Urgel (d. 1065) in his role of lieutenant (Ubieto 1981: 53–67).

The loss of Barbastro, besides causing strong sentiments of fragility in the Andalusi world, gave rise to the greatest *jihad* campaign ever launched in the *taifa* period, with the objective to reconquer the city. Al-Muzaffar of Lerida requested help from all Muslim leaders and got it from the king of Sevilla al-Muʿtadid (d. 1069), who sent 500 knights, but especially from his brother, al-Muqtadir of Zaragoza (d. 1082). The city was regained in April 1065. According to sources, the key to this Islamic triumph in the new siege of Barbastro was the arrival of 6,000 archers (perhaps crossbowmen), which caused the Christians to lock themselves behind the walls and to soon become tired in their defence due to the constant shower of projectiles. In addition, many sappers started to dig the city walls, while the archers, with their shots, prevented the defenders from attacking these sappers. It seems that, finally, they propped a wall and set the props on fire, thus opening a large breach through which they assaulted the city. Ermengol III of Urgel died during the defence of the town. In this siege, the usefulness and efficiency of the infantry, in this case archers, and of the sappers during sieges can be observed. Nevertheless, when the Andalusi border receded, a situation which was only stopped by Almoravid and Almohad interventions, Barbastro would be definitely conquered by Pedro I of Aragón (d. 1104) in the year 1100 (Ubieto 1981: 53–67).

Note

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2
Granada

Javier Albarrán[1]

Political outline

The Nasrid emirate of Granada, the last Islamic state formed in the Iberian Peninsula, was founded by Muhammad b. Yusuf b. Nasr, Muhammad I (d. 1273), when he proclaimed himself emir at Arjona, his native city, Jaen and Porcuna in 1232. Five years later he would be acknowledged as such in Granada, which became his capital. Between 1238 and 1239, he annexed Malaga and Almería. Several treaties with the Castilian kings Fernando III (d. 1252) and Alfonso X (d. 1284), under which he was acknowledged a vassal of Castile, paid *parias* and helped the Castilians militarily, allowed the emirate to survive before the great Castilian territorial expansion of the mid-13th century. At its moment of greatest expansion, besides Granada, it controlled some regions of Seville, Cordova, Jaen and Murcia, as well as the cities of Almería, Malaga and even some North African strongholds like Ceuta, which belonged to Granada during two different periods of the 14th century.

The extraordinary chronological dimension of the period is astonishing: it is the second most long-lasting dynasty of al-Andalus, only behind the Umayyad by a mere difference of 15 years: 260 versus 275. In this sense, one of the major questions raised by specialists is how the Nasrid emirate managed to survive in the context of the mid-13th century, when more than half of al-Andalus had been conquered in under 30 years. Some have argued that the main cause was Muhammad I's realism or political pragmatism, a position that allowed him to negotiate with Fernando III and accept his vassalage, which secured him the necessary peace to build and consolidate his state against other Muslim competitors and against the Christians themselves. Scholars have also raised the question of how the Nasrid emirate was capable of surviving for 260 years. Different answers have been given which, as always, are insufficient *per se* and, consequently, must all be combined: the mountainous nature of the territory reinforced by a network of castles and fortified cities; sea-exits and the vicinity to North Africa, which permitted help from the Marinids; the extraordinary Nasrid diplomatic ability, which carried out a balance of politics

between Castile, Aragon, Fez, Tlemcen and Tunis; external causes, such as fights and internal conflicts in Castile; the lack of Castilians necessary for repopulation; and the political, economic, and especially legitimizing and ideological interests in preserving a Muslim enemy (Vidal 2012: 53–66).

In 1246 Muhammad I signed the pact of Jaen, in which the Nasrid emir handed this town over to Fernando III of Castile and Leon, becoming his vassal and paying, during a 20-year truce, *parias* estimated at 150,000 golden *maravedís*, reduced to 50,000 in 1252, which was equivalent to half of his entire income. Since that time, Muhammad I had maintained a relationship with Castile which went from hostility to submission, but always with the intention of consolidating his authority. In 1254, the Jaen pact was renewed with Alfonso X, but soon after, hostilities were initiated with the resumption of Castilian warfare activity, this time against North Africa. This caused the Nasrids to turn to Tunis and Fez and encourage the Mudejar rebellions of Seville and Murcia. Alfonso X answered by penetrating Granadan territory, forcing the emir to sign a new pact with new *parias* in 1265 (Ladero Quesada 2000: 189–210; Molina 2000: 211–248).

Muhammad II (d. 1302) renewed the truce with Castile at a very high cost, but obtained the necessary peace to lay out a new relationship with the Marinids and to request help from them, which started a period marked by Maghrebi intervention. In 1275, Marinids disembarked in the ports of Tarifa and Algeciras, lent, along with Ronda, by Muhammad II, so that his North African allies had their own support bases. Thus, between 1275 and 1285, the Muslims brought war to the Guadalquivir Valley, inflicting considerable damage to the Castilian colonization process. When peace returned in 1286, the Marinids kept control of Algeciras, Tarifa and Ronda (Ladero Quesada 2000: 189–210; Molina 2000: 211–248).

Between 1275 and 1340, the political trajectory of Granada was linked to the so-called 'crisis of the Strait'. Until 1340, the emirate maintained a difficult geopolitical situation among the complex set of states and interests of the western Mediterranean. Because of the often uneasy relationship between Marinids and Granadans, Castile was finally victorious, especially after the victory of Alfonso XI (d. 1350) in the crusade of the Salado River (1340) against the Marinid sultan Abu al-Hasan ʿAli (d. 1351) and the Granadan emir Yusuf I (d. 1354), who definitively kept the Maghrebis out of the Peninsula. From then on, Islam began to decline and progressively recede from the commercial and maritime routes of the western Mediterranean and southern Atlantic, incipiently frequented by Castilians, the Aragonese and the Portuguese. Undoubtedly, the Marinid decadence influenced the immediate future of Granada, both for good and evil. The Nasrid emirate would become the hegemonic Islamic state in the Islamic West, but at the same time it would lose

an important ally in its defence. Granada would never overcome that state of isolation with regard to the rest of the Islamic world and, in the long run, its survival was doomed (Ladero Quesada 2000: 189–210; Molina 2000: 211–248).

Muhammad V (d. 1391) led the kingdom's longest period of peace. It was a favourable time for internal organization and for investment of time and money in artistic and literary creations: a good portion of the Alhambra and the entire work of Ibn al-Khatib (d. 1374) symbolize this perfectly. The emir maintained a good friendship with Pedro I (d. 1369) and even recovered several fortresses and had Cordova besieged. After the enthronement of Enrique II (d. 1379) and the Castilian war, he was in a favourable position to sign good truces, which were renewed for decades after 1370. During this period, Granada recovered Algeciras, which it held from 1369 to 1379, as well as territories dominated by the Marinids in al-Andalus, and even managed to control Ceuta between 1382 and 1386 (Ladero Quesada 2000: 189–210; Molina 2000: 211–248).

With the death of Muhammad V, under Yusuf II (d. 1392) and especially under Muhammad VII (d. 1408), frontier skirmishes became more frequent: Enrique III (d. 1406) was ready to resume war as early as 1400. The times of Castilian weakness were already over and Granadan incursions offered a wonderful excuse to wage war. Between 1407 and 1491, continuity characterized the Castilian political agenda: their common will to finish off the political existence of Granada and to incorporate the territory of the emirate. Hence, the life of 15th-century Granada had to surrender to the vicissitudes of Castilian weakness or strength, caused by the different political junctures brought about by the struggle between the nobility and the monarchy (Ladero Quesada 2000: 189–210; Molina 2000: 211–248).

From Yusuf II to Abu Nasr Sa'd (d. 1464), up to eight sultans succeeded one another, some of them more than once. It was the beginning of the period of decadence, aggravated by dynastic conflicts, internal crises and economic problems, derived from ever-increasing isolation from the remaining Islamic world. Only the brief interval corresponding to the reign of Enrique IV (d. 1474) and the Castilian crisis which began in 1464, granted a short truce to the Nasrid emirate. However, the union of Castile and Aragon through Isabel and Fernando, which came into effect in 1479, and the new sociopolitical tendencies of kingdoms about to become modern states, resulted in the definitive assault on the emirate, which began with the conquest of Alhama in 1482. As if this were not enough, the internal Nasrid crisis and their dynastic struggles precipitated the fatal outcome of an emirate which was under constant civil war during its last decades between the supporters of Abu al-Hasan ʿAli (Mulay Hacen of the Castilian chronicles, d. 1485) and of his son Muhammad XI (Boabdil, d. 1533) (González Jiménez 2000: 453–476).

Granadan towns fell one by one into Castilian hands: Ronda in 1485, Loja in 1486, Malaga in 1487 and Baza in 1489. That same year Mulay Hacen's brother handed over Almería and Guadix. Capitulation negotiations of the capital started in August 1491 and came into effect on 2 January 1492 with Boabdil's retirement to the manor of Las Alpujarras, a personal compensation for the surrendering of Granada to the Catholic Monarchs. The Muslims were allowed to preserve their faith, their estates and their life until 1501, when Cardinal Cisneros, archbishop of Granada, betrayed the capitulation pact and ordered mandatory conversion or the expulsion of the Muslims. A few years later, the same occurred in the remaining Castilian-Aragonese territories. This was the end of al-Andalus (González Jiménez 2000: 453–476).

Recruitment system and composition of the armies

Military obligations and recruitment methods

We know little of the military obligations and recruitment methods of the Nasrid army, apart from certain issues that seem to follow a line of continuity with what had been observed in previous periods of the Islamic history of the Iberian Peninsula. As in the previous Andalusi periods, the totality of the army was called *jaysh*. It was predominantly formed by the *jund*, the regular army, which consisted mainly of Andalusi soldiers, and occasionally also Maghrebis, the *ghuzat* or North African 'volunteers of the faith', as described by Ibn al-Khatib in the mid-14th century (Arié 1984: 122–135; Arié 1993: 147–193; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

From the point of view of its organization, recruitment followed the Cordovan model, with a register, *diwan*, arranged into territorial and military circumscriptions, which controlled the regular army. Apparently, during the time of Muhammad V, the register was reorganized in order to create a more equitable recruitment system, but we do not know in what ways. Moreover, the troops' salaries were paid in gold and through the concession of lands, *iqta*', which as a means of payment is not very well attested, so it is possible that this was disappearing. We are also not certain if North African contingents (which we will speak of later on) were included in this *diwan* or, since they were external troops often with a marked independent character, if they had their own control mechanisms (Arié 1984: 122–135; Arié 1993: 147–

193; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

Furthermore, it is possible that there were levies which were incorporated into the sultan's army whenever necessary. This is what the 'delegations of Muslims', *wufud al-muslimin*, which joined the Nasrid contingents in the Alhama siege, seem to refer to. If so, it is most likely that these levies were also organized according to territorial circumscriptions and that each region had to contribute a certain number of forces to the sultan's campaigns. The emir's army would be completed by mercenary troops, which, as will be seen below, also existed in the Nasrid period and were recruited and financed with tax income (Arié 1984: 122–135; Arié 1993: 147–193; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

Composition of the armies

As mentioned above, the Nasrid forces were composed of two main bodies that formed the *jund*: Andalusis and North Africans. The origin of the Andalusi contingents must be sought in the genesis of the Nasrid emirate itself: Ibn al-Ahmar founded this political entity with the support of the combatants of the frontier region of Arjona, who would later be joined by troops from his own lineage, the Banu Nasr, and of the Banu Asqilula as well. This original nucleus of Andalusi hosts would be joined by forces from other important local lineages, such as the Banu al-Mawl of Cordova and of the Banu Sasanid of Jaen, and also by soldiers who incorporated the forces in the territories conquered by the Nasrid leader. All these troops would become a part of the territorial *diwan* for recruitment, thus giving rise to the Andalusi *jund*. According to the sources, this regular army would always stay close to the sultan in the capital of the emirate, Granada. Thus, the forces of the *jund* would only move to carry out specific expeditions or to reinforce permanent military forces in certain areas, which, distributed throughout the remaining cities and fortresses, would rather perform police and defence functions at the service of local authorities (Arié 1984: 122–135; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

As for the North African troops, they formed part of an institution, the *ghuzat al-mujahidin*, 'combatants of the *jihad*'. This meant the arrival into al-Andalus of Maghrebi soldiers, *ghuzat*, who came to increase the ranks of the Nasrid army. Having authority over them, there was a member, usually a dissident, of the Marinid royal family – a descendant of the emir 'Abd al-Haqq Ibn Mahyu, founder of the dynasty, according to Marinid chroniclers – who was considered the *shaykh al-ghuzat*. This way the sultans of Fez delegated their obligation to intervene on the other side of the Strait of Gibraltar on members of their own family whose affinity with the dynasty was purely

nominal, simultaneously reducing, with the departure of these people, tensions and potential riots in their own territory (Manzano Rodríguez 1992: 305–322).

Apparently, this institution, *ghuzat al-mujahidin*, had its origin in the period of the Marinid sultan Abu Ya'qub Yusuf (d. 1307), under whose regime the Marinids lived a period of weakness in al-Andalus and in Maghreb that would have fitted in perfectly with the creation of this institution. This was because the attraction and utilization of dissident and rebellious elements could actually become an efficient Nasrid political instrument against the rival North African dynasty. Despite this Granadan interest, what stands out is the remarkable degree of autonomy and political independence acquired by this institution inside the Nasrid monarchy, not to mention tax and economic benefits. In theory, the Nasrid sovereign had absolute authority over his army, but in practice it was the *shaykh al-ghuzat* who mobilized his troops, something that gave the latter a good deal of power, with which he could put pressure on the sultan in favour of his own interests. As for their hypothetical function and their connection to holy war, Ibn Khaldun describes them as those in charge of undertaking the *jihad* along with the Nasrids of Ibn al-Ahmar, and affirms that al-Andalus 'would have known weak conditions, had it not been for the divine inspiration of these *Zanata* to undertake the *jihad*'. In any event, these troops, which were totally institutionalized and which were included in the *jund*, must not be mistaken for the still existing *jihad* volunteers, who, for instance, did *ribat* activities (Ibn Khaldun 1956: IV, 459; Manzano Rodríguez 1992: 305–322).

As Ibn Khaldun correctly says, these were mainly members of the *Zanata* Berber tribes, and used to wear turbans on their heads, as opposed to the Andalusi forces. The fact is that the importance of these Maghrebi troops in the Nasrid army was directly proportional to the independence they enjoyed on many occasions. Below the *shaykh al-ghuzat*, they held other offices, such as the chief (*ra'is*) or the 'axes or poles' (*qutb*), an interesting Sufi denomination that shows how this path of Islam was becoming one of the most followed in the 14th-century Islamic West. During the time of Muhammad V, the salary of these combatants was raised and the portion of the booty they had a right to was increased. Moreover, this same emir managed to suppress the office of *shaykh al-ghuzat* in the year 1381–1382 and thus bring an end to the annoying political influence they had managed to wield, taking these contingents under their direct orders (Manzano Rodríguez 1992: 305–322; Arié 1993: 147–193; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

As was common in previous periods, in the Nasrid armies there were also Christian mercenaries, who would continue to comprise heavy shock troops and should not be mistaken for renegades, *ma'luj*, who were originally slaves and therefore also called *mamluk*, who had converted to Islam and had been

manumitted. These latter forces normally made up the emir's personal guard, a highly professionalized corps, consisting of soldiers who, after being captured in a frontier incursion and converted to Islam, had from an early age received an education aimed at obedience to the Nasrid sovereign and warcraft (Arié 1984: 122–135; Arié 1993: 147–193; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

Chain of command

As for the organization of the troops, reference must be made to Ibn Hudhayl's passage (see Chapter 1, 'Chain of command') where he wrote, in the mid-14th century, a detailed description of the structure of the Nasrid army ranks, always mentioning that this could be an idealized description and not a system actually put into practice.

Furthermore, following a sovereign-warrior tradition which had been inaugurated in al-Andalus, as already seen, with the Umayyads, there are testimonies that the Nasrid emir, sometimes together with his chief vizier, put himself at the head of the troops on certain occasions. However, it was usually the emir who assigned the direction of military functions to a member of the royal family, or to a high dignitary of the government, who held the general command of the army, *wilayat al-qiyada*, or the command of the troops, *qawd al-juyush*. As examples, in the 14th century there were the famous *hajib* Ridwan (d. 1359), who was Muhammad IV, Yusuf I and Muhammad V's vizier, and the writer Ibn al-Khatib, raised to such command by Yusuf I in 1349. As typical elements of the Nasrid organization, we may mention the figures of the *qa'id* and of the *shaykh*, who, besides holding the military command of several strongholds, carried out functions related to the maintenance of the existing truces, especially with Castile in the frontier zones (Arié 1993: 147–193; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

Military operations

Attrition warfare

Attrition warfare, the greatest expression of which was, as in the previous Andalusi period, the *al-ghara*, *al-ghazwa* or *al-sa'ifa*, i.e. the small expeditions carried out especially in the summertime to weaken the different enemy

structures, continued to be the most usual military operations. Moreover, it could be said that their number increased due to the eminently frontier-like context of the Nasrid emirate. Often, these incursions consisted of a small group of horsemen penetrating enemy territory to destroy everything in their path, from harvests to small defensive structures, while avoiding any encounter with enemy troops, unless they were very small in number. The purpose of these military actions was not to eliminate enemy forces, but to wear down their means of subsistence.

These incursions also became an important economic activity and a source of income, since they gave rise, for example, to an important traffic of captives on both sides of the frontier. Thus, redeemers of captives, *al-fakkak* (*alfaqueque* in Christian sources), proliferated and, in exchange for a sum of money, offered their services to the relatives of a captive in infidel territory. These consisted of negotiating their freedom and, eventually, paying the ransom. Therefore, business with captives yielded large amounts of money simultaneously on both sides of the frontier and not only on the side that had obtained a booty of war prisoners. In addition, while waiting for the payment of the ransom, one could benefit from the working capacity of the prisoners in different tasks (López de Coca 1997: 395–408; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

Siege warfare

These incursions, especially the larger ones, the objective of which was not only to wear the enemy down, but also to gain control of a given territory, were accompanied by siege and fortress assault operations. Strongholds were normally unable to prevent and stop small incursions such as the ones mentioned earlier; however, to keep a territory under control, its fortifications had to be conquered.

The siege of a fortification or of a fortified town began with the deployment of the attacking troops around the town. After being warned of the imminent attack, the defenders proceeded to make the fortifications near the town unusable so that the enemy could not benefit from them, as well as to mortar doors that were not to be used for sorties and siege-breaking operations. The infantry, especially archers, tried to repel the assailants from the top of the fortifications, whereas the latter, who could have dug a moat as if it were a wall to protect themselves from enemy missiles, progressively closed in so as to use the different siege engines they had at their disposal: high wooden towers moved by wagons, ladders they lent on the wall to proceed to assault, rams, mangonels that hurled incendiary missiles and stones, and also light

ballistae. In turn, sappers dug subterranean galleries to reach the foundations of the walls, open a breach in them and make them collapse. Finally, either with ladders and other siege machinery or through a breach in the wall, the final assault was made. Another way of breaking the defence of the besieged was to set the doors on fire, as in the siege of Quesada in 1295, through which the Nasrids successfully seized the town (Arié 1984: 142–148; Arié 1993: 147–193; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

Little by little, new weapons were introduced in siege warfare. According to Ibn al-Khatib's testimony, for the first time during the reign of Isma'il I the Granadans used an engine which worked with nafta, *naft*, a fraction of petrol also known as benzine or ligroin, and which hurled a burning iron bullet against the fortress turret during the siege of the citadel of Huescar, north-east of Granada. Furthermore, sources tell that in the siege of Algeciras the besieged Muslims threw, by means of '*truenos*' (thunders), large bulky arrows and heavy iron bullets against the Christians (Arié 1984: 142–148; Arié 1993: 147–193; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

Pitched battles

There is a lack of descriptions accurate enough to allow us to reconstruct in detail the development of pitched battles in the Nasrid period. As in previous periods, we assume that, were the emir to have appeared in battle, he would have placed himself in the rearguard under the protection of his personal guard, formed by the *mamalik*. Moreover, it is probable that during the 13th century, and due to the Christian influence, both in equipment and weapons, the Granadans resorted to heavy cavalry charges, as was typical in Christian kingdoms. However, from the 14th century and due to the increasing relationship with the North African Marinids, it seems that the *karr wa farr* technique (*tornafuye* in Christian sources) became predominant again. As we have already mentioned in the previous chapter, this consisted of making repeated charges, followed by withdrawals and encircling techniques, by means of which one managed to throw the enemy lines, often characterized by having heavier equipment, into disarray and thus wear them down. Consequently, the light cavalry undertook this combat mode, but mounted archers were also largely present, as were Berber knights, who rode around the enemy hurling their javelins and then quickly withdrawing. Along with cavalry, an important feature was the support of infantry units equipped with spears, often in charge of stopping the Christian heavy cavalry charges, and especially troops of crossbowmen, who acquired an ever greater role in Islamic

armies (Arié 1984: 142–148; Arié 1993: 147–193; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

Logistics, supplies and funding

The necessary financing for the expeditions was deducted from the payment of the direct tax the Granadans had to pay, and to this consignment were added quantities usually available for the maintenance of permanent troops and the payment of salaries. A military foreman acted as an intermediary between the military and the finance administrations and was responsible for making the different payments. Such payment was controlled through the *diwan* itself, which would have a command, the *qiyadat diwan al-jund*, who would be in charge, among other things, of managing the payments. Sources also speak of two kinds of payment: the so-called 'known' payment, *al-ma'ruf*, and the grant, *al-ihsan*, which must have been a reference, respectively, to the regular salary and to some extraordinary payments. Forces also enjoyed the right to accommodation, *inzal*.

As for during-campaign logistics and equipment transportation, it can be inferred that this was still undertaken by means of pack animals and wagons. This must have been much more feasible, because campaign distances had been reduced considerably and the terrain was more densely populated, therefore offering more supply possibilities.

Armament

Ibn al-Khatib states that at the end of the 13th century, Granadan warriors were equipped similarly to their northern neighbours. They wore long armour and carried large iron spears. Moreover, each knight had his own coat of arms sign, *sima*, and a distinctive mark which made him recognizable, *shuhra*, i.e. the Andalusis had apparently adopted the armament and the characteristics of the Christian heavy cavalry. However, already in the last third of the 13th century, but especially since the 14th century, with the arrival of Marinid contingents, Nasrid Granada turned again to the Islamic and North African armament traditions: *alfanjes* (cutlasses) and light spears as offensive weapons as opposed to the long bulky spear of Christian influence (Arié 1993: 147–193; Soler 1991).

Also, there was a model of sword associated with the North African *jineta*

riding style (i.e. with short stirrups, forcing the rider to bend his knees while sitting, but allowing him to easily stand up while riding) of great significance, namely the *jineta* sword. Its main features were the presence of a tripartite hilt, associated with diverse kinds of pommels, and semicircular quillons with animal heads, characterized by curved arms in their outer side and vertical ones in the inner side. These swords, present in the paintings of the mid-14th century Granadan Casas del Partal, are, however, absent from the late 13th-century Cantigas – so they must have been introduced in that time span. Greatly appreciated by the Christians as well, these swords were slimmer and shorter than ordinary ones, and had a heavier and shorter grip, which was easier to handle and allowed the hand to lean on it to finish the strike. Among the most characteristic Granadan offensive weapons, there were also ear daggers distinguished by the shape of their pommel, composed of two diverging disks. North Africans carried darts and long staves with smaller ones and a cord in the middle which they handled with great skill (Arié 1993: 147–193; Soler 1991).

In the 13th century, during the assimilation of Christian armament, the Frank bow, i.e. the crossbow, appeared as one of the weapons in the Nasrid armies. Contrary to the Arab bow, which was handled only with the hands, this one was tensed with the feet. The Arab bow was the one most selected for the cavalry, whereas crossbows were useful for the infantry due to their range and accuracy, and for sieges and naval combats as well. However, it has been possible to document the existence of mounted crossbowmen at least since the mid-14th century, as may be observed in the Partal paintings and in some oriental cavalry treatises (Arié 1993: 147–193; Soler 1991).

Regarding defensive armament, the most characteristic were round wooden shields. North African contingents introduced leather bucklers, known as *adargas*. They were made from ox or onager leather, but the most esteemed were those made of *lamt* leather, a Saharan antelope with a very resistant hide. The *adarga* surpassed the Christian shield for its flexibility, since it was composed of leather pieces stuck and sewn together and was not stretched upon a wooden frame. Its original shape was ovoid, but in this period, it experienced a very marked evolution to a completely bivalve shape. Diverse coats of mail were still used: loose or tight, with more or less intertwined rings, open or closed around the neck, etc. Besides these, sources mention the use of the *jawshan*, with or without a breastplate, an oriental model characterized for its combination of *launas* or small metal plates which made the movement of the joints easier, with a ring-shaped mail. Helmets were made of iron in the shape of a sharp cone, with no nose shield or guards whatsoever, and were golden- or black-coloured. They could also be garnished with crests and neck shields, but it is not known whether these were made of mail or were simply

an extension of their back end. This conic helmet could have been of oriental influence, for they were documented in the Mamluk world (Arié 1993: 147–193; Soler 1991).

Remarkable progress was made in siege and artillery armament. We have mentioned before the use of *naft* engines that hurled burning iron bullets. Apparently, the invention of this craft, *alat al-naft*, which was shot with gunpowder, *barud*, fire-rocks, *suyur min nar*, could have been the work of Marinids of the western part of the world, effectively using it in the siege of Sijilmassa in the year 1274. Moreover, improvements made in artillery, especially in the times of the Catholic Monarchs, would have made siege and assault operations against fortifications easier. These advances also caused a modification in the armies' configuration, as the cavalry would yield in importance to the infantry and, especially, the artillery. Lombards and small-calibre weapons would proliferate, such as ribauldequins, arquebuses and blunderbusses. Although the Castilian army always took the lead in these improvements, Nasrids were not completely without artillery, especially in the final third of the 15th century. On many occasions, those who handled the Nasrid artillery were Christian renegades (Arié 1993: 147–193; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

Fortifications

The Nasrid emirate, subject to constant threat of conquest by the Christian kingdoms, created a territory control system based on a network of fortifications extending along the frontier, often in mountainous and sheer locations difficult

FIGURE 2.1 Muslim horsemen with *adargas* (shields). *Cantigas de Santa María*, 13th century. (Creative Commons)

to penetrate. At the end of the 13th century, they created a strategic line of castles. This defensive network did not prevent incursions, but did require costly and difficult siege warfare in order to control the territory. Several protection rings were established around cities and rural towns. This defensive programme also involved a rearrangement of the territory and its jurisdictions, and an attempt at their centralized control, since military governors (*qa'id*) were appointed from Granada to manage all these fortifications, thus preventing them, through rotation, from becoming territorial lords. In this territorial model there was a strong bond between cities and the fortifications

that were within their zone of influence, since any political change in the former affected and could be reproduced in the latter. In rural districts, such a centralization of territorial control was documented with the substitution of the *husun*, castle-refuges, for large-scale state fortresses, as may be observed in the zone of the Alpujarras. However, this centralization programme occasionally proved counterproductive, especially when fortification governors engaged in struggles between lineages (Arié 1993: 147–193; Acién 1995: 7–36; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

FIGURE 2.2 Nasrid watch tower (*atalaya*). Huéscar, Granada. (Creative Commons)

Such a system of territorial control through the construction of strongholds meant that the largest works concerning the fortification of the emirate depended on the initiative of the political power, which had to look for new financing means. For instance, al-Shatibi, a *mufti* of the second half of the 14th century who had good relations with Muhammad V, was in favour of implementing a tax to build and repair city walls. Frontier inhabitants were called to participate in the construction of defences and to give financial support. As expected, the defences of the capital also increased. In the 14th century, for example, the *hajib* Ridwan ordered the building of the great wall surrounding the Albaicín quarter. For his part, Muhammad V ordered the reconstruction of the Alhambra walls. In order to complete the defensive system of the Nasrid capital, a number of walls were built which linked the different isolated strongholds of the city (Arié 1984: 119–122; Viguera 2000:

432–475).

The truth is that during the time of Muhammad V, a relatively peaceful period, numerous construction projects were executed: the emir rebuilt 22 strongholds and erected numerous surveillance towers along the border. According to Ibn al-Khatib, up to 14,000 towers were counted during this sovereign's reign. Muhammad V's own hallmark in defensive works was the slender semi-circular square-plan tower that appeared in many frontier spots such as Moclín, Antequera, Archidona, Ronda and Grazalema. These towers, which almost always appeared in low numbers as a result of occasional reparations, were solid and with masonry fabric lined with rubble filling, which was a highly economical investment. Regardless of their economic value, their emblematic value must have been quite high, as an easily distinguishable token of state intervention. Coastal watchtowers, in turn, had a square plan. Also through state initiative, *burj*, towers with a more powerful defensive function than watchtowers, were erected, some of them richly decorated, such as that of La Gabia, in the mid-south of the Vega of Granada. This was built with mud walls with stone block-reinforced corners, and inside rooms were finished with barrel vaults and decorated with rich plasterwork (Acién 1995: 7–36; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

As for the evolution of the building models and military architecture, the Nasrid emirate in the 13th century followed the feudal practice of reduction in the fortified space. Thus, the Granada *alcazaba* was designed with a strictly military purpose, where the residential zone was limited to the large Vela and Homenaje towers. The building cores were encircled in a barbican and separated from the rest of the Alhambra hill by means of a front of towers and a large trench. Something similar may be observed in the Malaga *alcazaba*, a style that resulted from the relationship and interdependence between the early Nasrid period and the Castilian world. However, as was the case with armament, in the 14th century Nasrid architecture turned to the Islamic world and to post-Almohad forms under development in the Marinid sultanate. Under Yusuf I this trend was consolidated, which may clearly be observed in the palace of Comares and the Puerta de la Justicia, both in the Alhambra. Palace buildings and large ceremonial gates, of Almohad tradition, would predominate as an obvious propagandistic and legitimizing element to such an extent that they would be repeated in all the *alcazabas* of the kingdom, such as in Malaga or Almería (Acién 1995: 7–36).

FIGURE 2.3 The *Alhambra.* (Creative Commons)

Naval warfare

The navy was extremely important for the Granadans, since only the sea kept them connected to the rest of the Islamic world. There was a state fleet and the marine presence of the Marinids was remarkable. For them, having the Strait under control was essential to undertake military expeditions in the Iberian Peninsula. Corsair and pirate activity was equally important in the Nasrid emirate, which had naval units that attacked the Christian coasts, mainly the region of Alicante and the seas of Ibiza, especially from Malaga and Almería.

Furthermore, Nasrid sultans had a modest fleet of war galleys that at that time fought for control of the Strait of Gibraltar. However, the greater part of the Granadan navy was always made up of small-sized boats built in the dockyards of Malaga, Almuñecar and Almería. The naval situation in the early 14th century seemed to be a good one. Ceuta, a port of capital importance for the control of the Strait, had been conquered and Granadan ships even dared venture to the ports of the Crown of Aragon. At least five of the most prominent ports (Marbella, Estepona, Gibraltar, Algeciras and Tarifa), during different chronological periods, were controlled by the Marinids, acting as bridges with North Africa. In this sense, the port of Almería's earlier importance seems to have decreased in the 14th century to the advantage of Malaga, likely because of its greater relation with Granada. In some of the dockyards of these ports, *dar al-sinaʿa*, *fustas* and galiots suitable for privateer and cabotage navigation were constructed (Arié 1984: 152–161; López de Coca 1997: 395–408; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

In the second half of the 14th century, Muhammad V tried to enlarge his kingdom's fleet. The truth is, however, that the Granadan navy was not comparable to the Catalan navy. In a treaty concluded in 1377 between Muhammad V and Pedro IV, the Christian sovereign committed himself to

supplying 4 or 5 ships with 30 crossbowmen and 200 warriors to his Muslim ally; Muhammad V, in turn, promised to pay 900 golden dinars monthly to each ship's crew. This agreement provides evidence that the Nasrid fleet could not provide for itself exclusively from the ships built in its own shipyards. However, in the 15th century, the naval position of the Muslims began to weaken when the Portuguese seized Ceuta in 1415 (Arié 1984: 152–161; López de Coca 1997: 395–408; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

Directly related to the navy and to the control of the sea was the defence of the coastline, which was of extreme importance for a Nasrid emirate completely surrounded by water. As expected, towers and watchtowers were the most common constructions. Apparently, during the reign of Yusuf I, up to 40 surveillance posts were built or repaired, from the region of Vera to the western frontier of the Nasrid emirate. These constructions, which depended on the centralized action of Granada, were usually slender square-plan towers. To announce possible enemy attacks, smoke signals were used in the daytime and light signals during the night. However, due to the large number of small coastal incursions recorded, it did not seem to prove a very efficient method of defence. In addition, certain coastal defensive constructions proliferated, such as the famous *ribat*s, which did not depend on the state, but on the initiative of coastal populations that fed on holy war volunteers (Arié 1984: 152–161; López de Coca 1997: 395–408; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

Ideology of war

The Nasrid emirate was a state that, ideologically, lived in permanent *jihad* (for a consideration of the concept of *jihad* see 'Ideology of war' in Chapter 1), in constant warfare and in constant need of defence. In this sense, what became manifest with the Nasrid political and geographic situation was the consolidation and increase to the uttermost limits of the idea that al-Andalus was a land in permanent confrontation with the infidel.

The land of al-Andalus was represented as a frontier (*thaghr li al-muslimin*), a place of *jihad*, of *ribat*, and of martyrdom for Muslims, likened to a constant blaze. This tradition had already been settled – and widely spread, especially after the 13th century due to the Christian advance –, originating in certain hadiths of the Prophet, in which al-Andalus is described as the last land the Muslim religion will expand to and also as the first one it will disappear from. These texts reflected the 'feeling of precariousness' of the Muslim presence in the Iberian Peninsula, the idea that its domain was doomed to end sooner or

later due to the prowling dangers, mostly represented by Christians. Hence, al-Andalus also remained in the Muslim imagination, shaped since the earliest times as a land of *ribat*, i.e. as a place of congregation for pious peoples who combined prayer and other religious acts with the fight against the infidels (Fierro 2008: 31–80).

In this sense we must understand the words of Abu al-Hasan al-Bunnahi, supreme cadi of the Nasrid emir Muhammad V, who in the last third of the 14th century stated the following: 'Against all expectations, let God prove benevolent with the inhabitant of this island [*scil.* al-Andalus], surrounded by the stormy sea and by the infidel enemy'. The Nasrids were aware that they were surrounded by the sea and enemies on all four cardinal points. Revolving around this idea were the specific aspects of his theory on war and on *jihad* as developed, which will be seen below. In addition, another novelty of this period was the appearance of several 'chivalry' works, more of a courtesan than of a military nature, which demonstrate the extent to which warrior life was idealized. Among other things, this apparently responded to an interest in martial arts and horse riding that developed in the later 13th century, similar to what occurred in the east with the Mamluks (Carmona 1997: 47–57; Viguera 2000: 432–475).

Thus, it is between these two issues, the sentiment of precariousness and of a need for constant military activity, on the one hand, and the proliferation of 'chivalry' literature, on the other, where we must place the famous work of Ibn Hudhayl, a Granadan courtesan who lived in the latter half of the 14th and early 15th centuries, which will allow us to satisfactorily analyse the Nasrid ideology concerning war. In the title of his, so to say, *jihad* treatise is the 'Ornament of the souls and emblem of the inhabitants of al-Andalus'. Ibn Hudhayl, in agreement with the context of military and territorial precariousness and the constant enemy threat upon the Nasrid emirate, granted an important role in his work to defensive *jihad*, represented by the importance that *ribat* had according to him. In his opinion, to do *ribat* implied establishing volunteers in strongholds, to defend them firmly. In this sense, he also devoted a section of his treatise on the rulers of frontiers and the leaders of expeditions, *al-sa'ifa*, essential pillars for the defence of the Nasrid kingdom. Encouragement to *jihad* was also a matter of extreme relevance for Ibn Hudhayl. It was necessary to involve the population in the maintenance of the frontier and Nasrid warfare against the infidel (García Sanjuán 2016: 369–398).

Together with this constant *jihad*, we also find in the Nasrid emirate certain attitudes justifying its, at least temporal, interruption, based mostly on political necessity. Granada signed many truces with the peninsular Christian kingdoms, and the Qur'anic doctrine advised not to fight those who had made

a pact with the Muslims. These truces were not to last more than ten years, yet this was only a theoretical and ideal approach, since this was not observed in practice. Al-Bunnahi noted that, as he was writing during the time of Muhammad V, the truce had already lasted 32 years, which had begun upon Alfonso IX's death in 1350 during the siege of Gibraltar. However, despite not directly criticizing so long-lasting a pact, this scrupulous scholar, close to the Nasrid emir's policies, did show a certain disapproval by indicating that a truce like this could actually be one of the signs announcing the end of the world (Carmona 1997: 47–57).

Main campaigns

(See Chapter 3, Second Part – Late Middle Ages – 'Main campaigns'; for the Battle of El Salado specifically, see Chapter 3, Second Part – Late Middle Ages – 'Pitched battles'.)

The Battle of Higueruela

This battle, which took place in the summer of 1431 in the Elvira mountain range in Granada, opposed the Castilian troops of Juan II, led by the king himself and the constable Álvaro de Luna, to the Nasrid army under Muhammad XI. It was one of the greatest battles ever fought in the Castilian-Granada war in the 15th century. The Castilian king seemed determined to finish off the Nasrid emirate, so he sent three armies simultaneously: one to the Ronda range, a second one to the Montefrío region, and another to the Vega of Granada, which he personally led. Towards the end of June 1431, warned about the advance of a powerful Castilian army, the Nasrid peasants left their fields and took refuge in the fortified towns around Granada.

The battle can be divided into two phases. The first was characterized by the previous skirmishes between the Christian troops, who carried out flattening works on canals and cliffs to make the siege of the Nasrid capital easier, and the Muslims, who sortied to make small attrition incursions. Thus, between 25 and 28 June, Muhammad IX's light detachments began to harass the enemy. The next day, the Nasrid emir sent contingents to the upper region of la Vega, where they positioned themselves between plantations, irrigation canals and marshes, with the purpose of bringing the enemy into less suitable lands for heavy cavalry manoeuvres. The Christians, however, figured this plan out and

did not fall into the trap. Furthermore, on 30 June, Granadan archers tried to entice the Castilian lords at the head of the royal guard into an ambush, but were also repelled. Then began the second phase of the battle, once both armies broke their camps in the Vega of Granada and deployed their forces. Battle was engaged on 1 July 1431. The constable Álvaro de Luna launched his troops against the enemy, whose vanguard, largely made up of popular levies and volunteers, was massacred; next, the Castilian cavalry confronted a very well-trained and well-prepared Granadan cavalry. After a tough fight, the Castilians managed to break the Nasrid front and carry off their victory, and the Nasrids were forced to seek refuge in Granada. Despite their overwhelming victory, the Castilians were unable to exploit their triumph due to internal conflicts, so the fall of Granada only took place later, in 1492 (Seco de Lucena 1956: 103–117).

Note

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3
Castile-Leon

I Early and High Middle Ages (8th to 13th Centuries)

Francisco García Fitz, Carlos de Ayala Martínez and Martín Alvira Cabrer[1]

Political outline

The kingdom of Castile-Leon was the heir to the kingdom of Asturias, the first hub of resistance against Islam which arose after the Battle of Covadonga (718 or 722). Francisco García Fitz In subsequent decades it expanded east to Alava, west to Galicia and south to the Douro River Valley, and in the 10th century, the city of Leon became the capital of the kingdom. During the 9th and 10th centuries, it endured constant Muslim military raids, which usually crossed its eastern frontiers, a territory that was originally a county dependent on the kingdom of Leon. This territory began to be known as Castile, due to the large number of fortresses built to defend it.

However, as of the mid-10th century, in practice, the Counts of Castile acted independently, which frequently created tensions that led to the Battle of Tamaron (1037), where the monarch of Leon (Bermudo III) was killed, and succeeded on the throne by the Count of Castile, Fernando I (1037–1065), who thus became the first king of Castile and of Leon.

This monarch took advantage of the crisis of the caliphate in Cordova and the breakup of al-Andalus into smaller states – *taifa* kingdoms – to extend his rule southward, conquering Viseu, Lamego and Coimbra and to impose tributes – *parias* (see Glossary) – on several *taifas* in exchange for peace or military protection. Upon his death (1065), he divided the kingdom between his sons – Sancho II as the king of Castile, Alfonso VI of Leon and Garcia of Galicia – which would finally lead to a civil war between the three (1067–1072), ending in the reunification of the kingdom under the rule of Alfonso VI (1072–1109). The latter expanded his kingdom to the east, to the detriment of

the

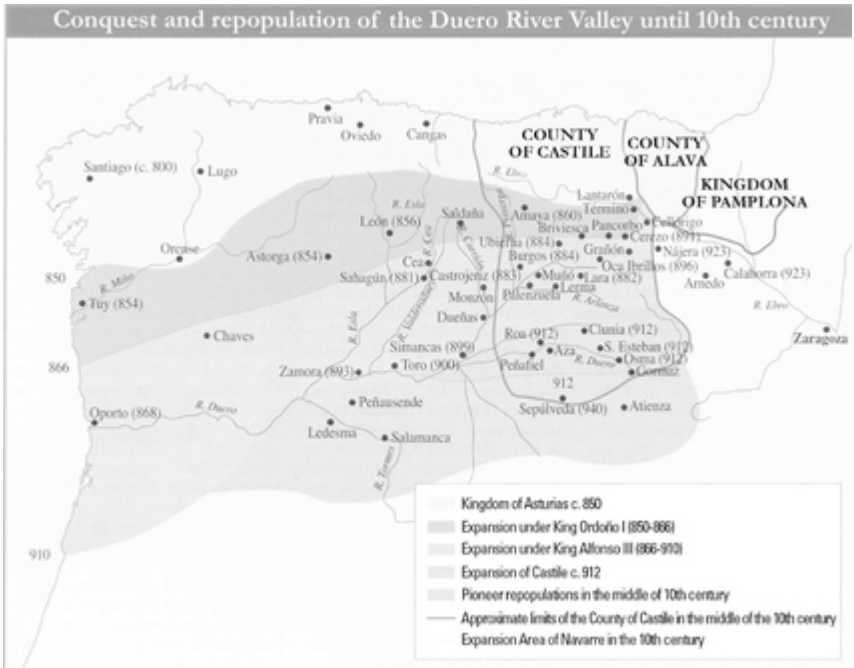

FIGURE 3.1 Conquest and repopulation of the Duero River Valley until 10th century. (From José María Monsalvo Antón, *Atlas Histórico de la España Medieval*, Editorial Síntesis, Madrid, 2010)

FIGURE 3.2 Christian kingdoms, 1035. (From José María Monsalvo Antón, *Atlas Histórico de la España Medieval*, Editorial Síntesis, Madrid, 2010)

kingdom of Pamplona in 1076, and turned the main *taifas* – Toledo, Badajoz, Seville, Granada and Zaragoza – into tributary states. In 1085, Alfonso VI conquered Toledo, moving the borders of the kingdom of Castile-Leon to the Tagus River Valley.

To block his expansion, some *taifa* rulers sought military support from the Almoravid Empire, a Berber state that had just formed in North Africa. In 1086, the Almoravids defeated Castile-Leon in the Battle of Zalaca and also overthrew the *taifa* rulers and unified al-Andalus, which became integrated into the North African empire. Throughout the rest of Alfonso VI's reign, the Almoravids repeatedly defeated the troops of Castile-Leon in several pitched battles, in one of which (Ucles, 1108) the heir to the throne was killed. They also recovered much of the territory lost by Islam south of the Tagus River, although they failed in their attempts to recapture the city of Toledo. In contrast, during the same period, Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, El Cid, managed to conquer the city of Valencia (1094) and create his own personal lordship.

FIGURE 3.3 Christian kingdoms, 1086 (after the conquest of Toledo). (From José María Monsalvo Antón, *Atlas Histórico de la España Medieval*, Editorial Síntesis, Madrid, 2010)

Alfonso VI's death without a male heir left Castile-Leon entrenched in a profound crisis: his daughter, Queen Urraca (1109–1126), was married to Alfonso I of Aragon, but their troubled relationship led to a civil war which further complicated the military situation on the borders to the south of the

kingdom, subject to constant attacks by the Almoravids. When Urraca's son, Alfonso VII (1126–1157), rose to the throne of Castile-Leon, coinciding with the first signs of crisis in the Almoravid Empire, the panorama began to change: after settling several conflicts with the kingdoms of Aragon, Navarre and Portugal, which was originally a county of Leon, he undertook a series of annual campaigns against the Muslims between 1130 and 1145, which contributed to the disappearance of the Almoravids and a new fragmentation of al-Andalus – the second *taifa* kingdoms. This situation enabled Alfonso VII, who was proclaimed *Imperator totius Hispaniae* in 1135, to conquer important towns to the south of the Tagus River and in the Guadalquivir River Valley, although the most spectacular operation was the conquest of Almería in 1147.

FIGURE 3.4 Christian attacks during the time of Alfonso VII. (From José María Monsalvo Antón, *Atlas Histórico de la España Medieval*, Editorial Síntesis, Madrid, 2010)

However, at the same time, another Berber empire had formed in North Africa, the Almohads, which would soon intervene in the Iberian Peninsula and once again unify al-Andalus. As a result, the kingdom of Castile-Leon lost much of the territory taken over during the reign of Alfonso VII. Upon his death in 1157, the kingdom was divided between his sons: Ferdinand II in Leon (1157–1188) and Sancho III in Castile (1157–1158). However, the death of Sancho III left Castile in the hands of a minor, Alfonso VIII (1158–1214). Border issues between Castile, Leon and Portugal, compounded by the fact that the

king of Castile was underage, led the Almohads to become the dominant political and military power in the Iberian Peninsula for more than four decades. In 1195, the Castilians suffered a major defeat in the Battle of Alarcos at the hands of the Almohads and for the next two years the kingdom was the target of serious attacks by the North Africans, Alfonso IX of Leon (1188–1230) and Sancho VII of Navarre, leading to a significant decrease in territory to the south of the Tagus and forcing Castile to sign truces with the Muslims.

This situation started to change in 1210 when certain Christian kingdoms – Castile, Aragon and Navarre – joined forces against Muslim rule and, in 1212, a coalition led by Alfonso VIII of Castile defeated the Almohads in the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa.

When the Almohad empire endured a severe crisis in 1224, which would eventually lead to its disappearance, both Alfonso IX of Leon and his son Ferdinand III of Castile (1217–1252) were absolutely ready to rise up as the protagonists of a significant territorial expansion into what is currently Extremadura and the upper Guadalquivir River Valley. The death of the sovereign of Leon in 1230 and the recognition of Ferdinand III of Castile as the king of Leon represented the definitive reunification of the two kingdoms. The resulting addition of resources was immediately reflected in the advancement of its southern borders, especially in the Guadalquivir River Valley – Jaen, Cordova, Seville – and in Murcia.

FIGURE 3.5 Las Navas de Tolosa campaign. (© Martín Alvira Cabrer)

His heir, Alfonso X, the Wise (1252–1284), entered the annals of history for his attempt to implement a policy to strengthen royal power based on Roman law – his *Siete Partidas* – which failed due to opposition from the nobility and the cities. He was faced with noble rebellions on several occasions and failed in his attempt to be elected as the emperor of Germany. Against the Muslims, he managed to annex certain small towns near Seville and endeavoured, with limited success, to undertake a crusade in North Africa. The pressure he placed on the Muslims in his own kingdom – the Mudejars – caused a dangerous revolt in 1264, while forcing the kingdom of Granada to seek the aid of a new Berber empire, the Marinids. They crossed the Strait of Gibraltar on several occasions starting from 1275 onwards, plundering the Guadalquivir River Valley and taking important positions in the Strait: Tarifa and Algeciras. The military crisis caused by their invasion, in conjunction with the dynastic problem resulting from the death of the king's first-born son, Fernando de la Cerda, and the pretensions to the throne of his second son, Sancho, against his father's will, ended up deteriorating into civil war from 1282 to 1284.

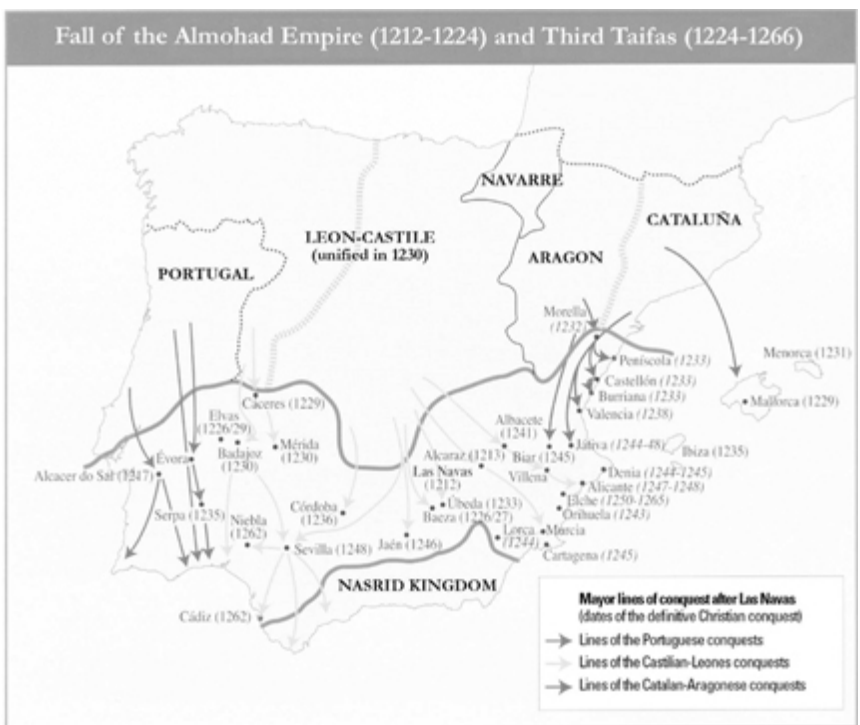

FIGURE 3.6 Fall of the Almohad Empire (1212–1224) and Third *Taifas* (1224–1266). (From José María Monsalvo Antón, *Atlas Histórico de la España Medieval*, Editorial Síntesis, Madrid, 2010)

Upon Alfonso X's death, his son Sancho IV (1284–1295) effectively blocked

the invasions by the Marinids, conquering the fortress of Tarifa in 1292, which was the first step toward the so-called 'Battle of the Strait'. But his reign was tarnished by the shadow of illegitimacy, as his nephews, the *Infantes de la Cerda*, claimed their rights to the throne with support from the king of Aragon. When he died in 1294, his heir, Ferdinand IV (1295–1312), was still a minor, giving way to the conflictive late medieval period in Castile-Leon (Manzano 2010).

FIGURE 3.7 Christian kingdoms, 1264. (From José María Monsalvo Antón, *Atlas Histórico de la España Medieval*, Editorial Síntesis, Madrid, 2010)

Recruitment system and composition of the armies

Military obligations and recruitment methods

The most widespread type of military obligation was the general duty that required all subjects to go to war without payment whenever summoned by the king or whenever the kingdom was under attack. The first legal formulation of this is found in Alfonso X's *Partidas*, but it existed before that time. When in need of defence – *apellido* (see Glossary) – the obligation fell, in particular, on all the inhabitants of the territories or cities directly affected by

the attack or threat. However, when the king organized an offensive expedition into enemy territory – *fonsado* (see Glossary) – the obligation was much more selective and only affected those expressly summoned by the king. Moreover, one could be exempted from such military service through the payment of a fee, the *fonsadera*. It can be assumed that the representatives of the royal power in each territory – counts, authorities (*potestades*), tenants, etc. – would make the call and selection, and also organize the contingent and their transfer to the general meeting point.

A second form of military obligation and recruitment derived from feudal-vassal relations. This was the military duty that a vassal had to accept in exchange for the feud or fief that he had received from the lord: hence, Castilian noblemen who received monetary payment, rule over fortresses, lands or military equipment – horses and loricas – were required to fulfil three months of military service. This system provided monarchs with contributions from their direct vassals, but also authorized the latter – the major feudal lords – to gather their own militias. The magnitude of the service required from the vassal – the number of knights he had to contribute, the equipment with which he had to appear and the type of operations in which he had to participate – depended on the value of the fief he had received.

Thirdly, both monarchs and nobles and other institutions could recruit combatants by paying them money – known as *soldadas*. In this way, rulers could maintain permanent forces – personal guards or castle garrisons –, extend the temporary service of their subjects or vassals or hire troops.

Finally, expectations of financial benefit, either through spoils or by sharing out conquered lands, and the subsequent possibility of moving up in society, going from an owner of no land to landowner or from foot soldier to knight, earning prestige or fame, and even hopes of achieving spiritual privileges granted by the ecclesiastical authorities to those that fought against Islam, motivated many combatants to join the army (García Fitz 2001: 64–88).

It is impossible to know exactly how many combatants a monarch could recruit with these methods: a mid- or long-range cavalry raid that penetrated enemy territory for two or three weeks could bring together around 1,000 or 1,200 knights and foot soldiers ranging from 1,000 to nearly 3,000 in number at the most, but other, more complex operations of longer duration, such as a major siege – for example, in Seville, 1248 – or carefully prepared campaigns, such as that of Las Navas de Tolosa, required more numerous contingents – around 4,000 knights and 8,000 or 10,000 foot soldiers (Alvira 2012: 326–330).

Composition of the armies

The royal army was composed of a juxtaposition of recruited contingents funded and maintained mainly by cities, secular and ecclesiastical nobles and military orders. It was a diverse force of a non-permanent nature with little training as a whole. Nevertheless, some of the components of this group, personal guards of the monarchs and the military order troops, were highly trained (García Fitz 2001: 88–113; Ladero Quesada 2010: 146–148).

Personal guard of monarchs

These were armed retinues, mainly knights and crossbowmen, in charge of the personal safety of the kings, but they also represented the core around which the rest of the army was organized when called upon. These *mesnadas* (see Glossary) or *militiae regis* were linked to the monarchs by an oath of fealty and received monetary payment. In this period, they were not significant in number – the personal guard of Ferdinand III of Castile had no more than 150 or 200 men, between knights and crossbowmen, and it is thought to have been one of the best equipped. However, their military importance was not based on their number but rather on their professionalism, military preparedness and permanent availability.

Military Order troops

Carlos de Ayala Martínez

Arising in the Holy Land after the First Crusade, as in the case of the Templar and the Hospitaller Orders, these institutions combining religious and military life quickly took root in the Christian kingdoms of the Peninsula, where they also sparked the creation of specifically Hispanic orders, such as those of Santiago, Calatrava and Alcantara, although other minor orders and brotherhoods also existed and their military significance in the wars against Islam was much greater than that of the 'international' ones. Their permanently mobilized troops formed part of the royal army starting in the mid-12th century, but they also had the capacity to act autonomously and maintained a good number of fortresses along the borders (Ayala 2003).

Within them, we can distinguish up to five groups of combatants: brother-knights, *sergents* (or sergeants), mercenaries, vassals of the corresponding jurisdictions and 'circumstantial' combatants. The first group was dominant in

the social hierarchy within these institutions and, thanks to its military specialization, it was the most valuable contingent, even though it was a minority proportionally. They went into battle fully equipped which, according to documentation from the 13th century, consisted of two mounts – one armour-clad horse and a smaller one used for transport – with an entourage comprising of another combatant on horseback and two or three foot soldiers, all of whom were charged to the relevant command's income.

Sergeant-brothers, which had a strong presence among the Templar, Hospitaller and Teutonic Orders, did not have a significant presence among the Hispanic military orders. There is evidence of them only in the Order of Santiago, but they can also be found in a few other militias under other names – *squires*. They were likely few in number and, like the brother-knights, they also fought on horseback, but with less sophisticated military equipment.

Furthermore, these institutions could rely on other troops that fought under their command without being members of the order. This was the case with certain professional corps – knights and crossbowmen – that fought with them in exchange for *soldadas*, or wages, making them similar to mercenaries, and of the vassals in their jurisdiction: the grand masters had the capacity to garner military collaboration from the knights and foot soldiers in their boroughs, whose obligations were stipulated in local legislation, called *fueros*. A final group of combatants, which was probably not terribly large in number but which is well-documented, is that comprising knights – and surely also foot soldiers – who could be considered spiritually committed volunteers of the different orders, generally of a non-permanent nature. These 'circumstantial' combatants are the *milites ad terminum* found overseas: volunteers that opted to receive the spiritual benefits granted by popes, for whom they worked with the orders in military tasks or with members of noble families related to the orders through family ties.

There is not much data on the number of these troops but evidence indicates that they were quite modest: the project to aid Baldwin II of Constantinople by the Order of Santiago in 1246 stipulates collaboration by 50 knights *et non plures*, a figure that perhaps alludes to the entire human potential of this order. Certainly, the 55 knights and the grand master of the Order of Santiago, who died in 1280 in an ambush set up by the Muslims in Moclin, represented the majority of its brothers. More significant yet is the fact that, in the conquest of Seville in 1248, one of the most important crusading efforts of the *Reconquista*, the actual presence of brother-knights, especially from the Orders of Santiago and Calatrava, must not have exceeded 200, in addition to the diverse contingents mobilized around them, regarding which it is virtually impossible to hazard a guess at their numbers. These small figures are related to the unfinished institutionalization processes that the orders were still experiencing

before the end of the 13th century. However, it is also true that the figures are not always decisive in judging their military importance, given that, on the other hand, they were highly qualified: they were often put in charge of difficult missions and, due to their experience, their advice and leadership was highly esteemed.

As the 14th century drew near, the situation began to change: shortly before 1300, commanderies – *encomiendas* (see Glossary) – were adequately equipped from an economic perspective, capable of sustaining greater military force, which now appeared arranged into *lanzas* (see Glossary), an operational unit composed of two knights and two or three foot soldiers, based on the model established by the Order of Santiago in 1274.

Noble militias

In order to fulfil their duties as subjects or as vassals, when summoned by the king, nobles had to contribute certain troops that they recruited themselves and organized to their lordships. These militias were non-permanent in nature, coming together to perform an operation and breaking up when it concluded, and did not form a homogeneous group as regards either social status, preparation or the armament used by their members. The core group consisted of knights with family or vassal ties to the main noble. They were usually well trained and represented the heavy cavalry. In addition, there were other, lower-ranking knights who had made a vocation of war – known as *infanzones* – and the *caballeros villanos* – who often had lighter armament – and also foot soldiers from the hamlets or cities in the noble's jurisdiction.

Little is known of their internal structure, although the main noble would certainly have been their leader, perhaps with the assistance and counsel of a trusted officer, which some sources refer to as the lord's *armiger* or *alférez* (see Glossary). These militias could act autonomously, outside of or against royal commands and, even when they were part of the royal army, they maintained their internal coherence, without being broken up into higher-ranking units.

It is not easy to quantify their size but the number of warriors that a noble managed to gather depended on his wealth and the fiefs and honours he received, which varied greatly. However, there is some evidence to indicate that, by the mid-13th century, a noble host of 100 fully equipped knights and 400 or 500 light cavalry members and foot soldiers was considered a large-sized noble contingent, meaning that most contributions were smaller in number.

In terms of quality and number, the sum of all the noble militia represented

one of the most important contributions to the formation of the royal army. Estimates made for the army of Castile-Leon which was brought together for the conquest of Seville in 1248 indicate that, among the 15 main nobles summoned, they may have gathered some 2,000 heavily armed knights, which represents half of the cavalry recruited by Ferdinand III for this operation (García Fitz 2000: 124–127).

Urban militias

The troops provided by city governments, or *concejos*, represented another major source of mass recruiting of combatants, although these were not permanent contingents either. Urban militias, or *milicias concejiles*, were composed of the residents of each city, who thus fulfilled their obligations set forth in the *fueros*, or local legislation. They were recruited and commanded by local authorities – judges or *alcaldes* (mayors) – and were organized and led by officers comprising the intermediate chain of command, *adalides*. Each resident joined the militia as a knight, forming the so-called popular cavalry or *caballería villana* (see Glossary), or as a foot soldier, depending on his wealth and the type of armament he voluntarily or mandatorily provided, which was stipulated in each *fuero* (Powers 1988).

Between the 11th and 13th centuries, urban militias played a very important role in the military organization of the kingdom and in the war on the borders. On the one hand, local governments enjoyed a great amount of autonomy and became involved in military operations at their own discretion and in the service of their particular interests, since they had sufficient legal and military resources to defend their walled cities and territorial boundaries when they were attacked. Thus, when the monarchical power was in crisis, such as when monarchs like Alfonso VII and Alfonso VIII were still minors or in the late 13th century with the Marinid invasions, the weight of defending the borders fell mainly on the urban militias. Moreover, their political and military autonomy enabled them to organize offensive expeditions into enemy territory, where they perpetrated raids entailing widespread destruction and plundering. In this way, throughout the 12th century, the armies of Avila, Salamanca and Toledo frequently attacked al-Andalus territory, returning loaded with spoils and prisoners, which made war a very important economic activity for these towns. On the other hand, they also formed part of the royal army when they were summoned. Local legislation usually established the obligation to heed the call of the king at least once a year for a certain period of time – usually from one to three months – although the recruiting usually

only affected knights, or some of them, and sometimes part of the foot soldiers.

These forces were essential to the monarchs in organizing expeditions into enemy territory, given their experience and the number of combatants that, as a whole, they provided, ranging from 10 or 20 to 100 knights, depending on the size of each town.

For all these reasons, although the popular cavalry and foot soldiers of the cities were not professional warriors, but rather craftsmen, merchants, farmers or herders, and their service was temporary, their presence was a constant in most royal campaigns.

Castle garrisons and tenancies

Castles and other types of fortresses were an essential element in the military organization of Castile and Leon during this period because war, to a great extent, revolved around the control over space and this was only possible by wielding power over fortifications. For this reason, rule over a fortress, called *tenencia*, was granted by the lord of the castle – the king, the grand master of a military order, a noble or a city – to a trusted person, the *alcaide*, who was in charge of security and keeping watch, of recruiting men as members of the garrison and of supplying the castle with sufficient water, food and arms.

Garrisons were permanent professional troops who were paid a *soldada*. Despite the fact that the number of men, usually spearmen and crossbowmen, was very limited – depending on the fortification size, it could range from approximately 10 to 100, although in the event of danger or war the troops were increased – their military role was quite important, since maintaining control over the land and the men depended on how they acted. Furthermore, these garrisons, especially those of border castles, often participated in offensive operations into enemy territory, thus contributing to the war of attrition.

Chain of command

One of the characteristics of the royal army was the lack of a stable, hierarchical chain of command. The supreme commander of the army was the king, who made decisions with advice given by a council of war composed of trusted nobles, grand masters of military orders and even bishops. The only documented military rank was that of *alférez*, who was originally in charge of bearing the king's flag, but who was also responsible for leading the army

when the monarch was not personally heading up the troops. Leadership and organization of the contingents that joined the royal army fell, therefore, on the political or social leaders of each such group, which kept their own internal hierarchy and organization.

Military operations

Martín Alvira Cabrer

Military practice in Western Iberia had some distinctive characteristics. Most importantly, it was conditioned by the territory bordering Islam. So, although there were internal conflicts and wars between Christian powers, the confrontation against the Muslims of al-Andalus was more important. Iberian warfare, in this sense, can only be compared to that of the Crusades in the Holy Land. On the ground, infrastructures (Roman roads, ravines) could channel military operations, also conditioned by rivers (the Douro, Tagus, Guadiana and Guadalquivir), mountain systems (the Cantabrian Mountains, Central System and Sierra Morena) and an urban network formed by Roman, Islamic and Christian cities. War was more frequent in spring and summer, although the shift of the borders to the southern Peninsula from the 12th century allowed military activity to be less conditioned by the seasons. Beyond these regional particularities, military operations in Western Iberia presented characteristics common to the rest of Christian Europe.

Attrition warfare

As elsewhere, kings and military commanders (*cabdiellos*) did not systematically apply strategies of direct confrontation with the enemy, such as the conquest of strongholds and pitched battles. They preferred strategies of indirect confrontation, which were better suited to the limited means available and militarily more efficient. This consisted of temporary attrition operations aimed at continuously weakening the enemy's military, economic, political and psychological bases (García Fitz 1998: 59–126; Ladero Quesada 2010: 162–164). In the Castilian-Leonese military treatises of the late 13th and early 14th centuries, this form of war was called *guerra ligera* ('light warfare') (*Second Partida*), *guerra de passada* ('passing warfare') (*Espéculo*) or *guerra guerriada* (Don Juan Manuel, *Libro de los estados*).

It was based on devastating raids (*cavalgadas*) of variable size, range, duration and intensity (García Fitz 1998: 127–170). The most common were the *algaras*, *correduras* or *cavalgadas en cobierto* ('covert raids'), which were short-range operations of short duration (one or a few days). Small contingents of lightly armed men on horseback rushed into the enemy territory, preferably at night, taking advantage of the element of surprise, and then returned to their base – a fortification or a frontier town – before the defenders could organize themselves. The purpose of these operations was to attack specific targets (villages, towns, strong points), to steal food and animals, to kill or capture the population and to destroy the agricultural infrastructure and crop fields. Booty played a central role in these operations, conditioning both the planning and objectives (García Fitz 1998: 78–100).

From the earliest stages of the conflict large raids were carried out, led by the king or a magnate, with larger forces and penetrating deeply into enemy territory. Little is known about their organization before the 11th century (Ladero Quesada 2010: 115–120; Isla 2010: 134–135, 188). The troops, including horsemen, foot soldiers and archers (some on horseback), concentrated on a fixed place (Oviedo, León, Zamora, Lerma). The itineraries were planned with the help of Mozarabic or Muslim guides. The expedition was preceded by ceremonies in which the army and the banners were blessed. In campaign, the command of the army fell to the *adalides*, who were military leaders with great knowledge and experience. Some of these early incursions were remarkably successful. In 797, King Alfonso II of Asturias crossed al-Andalus reaching as far as Lisbon; in 860, Count Rodrigo of Castile arrived in Talamanca, in the centre of the Peninsula; and in 915, King Ordoño II of Leon led his troops forward to the outskirts of Mérida, more than 300 kilometres from his starting base.

FIGURE 3.8 Booty of war. (Alfonso X, *Cantigas de Santa María*, Cantiga 165, Biblioteca de El

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At the same time, the Christians developed response mechanisms to the Muslim incursions, which were especially brutal in the case of the *aceifas* of the Umayyad armies. When a raid was detected, the defenders watched its movements from a distance. If they had time the local population fled to fortified places. Local defensive troops (*apellido*) were effective against minor incursions. If these were large, they prepared ambushes (*çeladas*) for small groups of attackers. In the meantime, a greater force was organized to intercept the enemy during its retreat, since an army carrying booty moved more slowly. It was convenient to block its way by controlling the passes. The persecution could end in a frontal combat, although Don Juan Manuel recommended recovering the spoils rather than killing the raiders (*Libro de los estados*).

During the 11th and 12th centuries many attrition operations were carried out by the municipal militias of the frontier towns, most often autonomously (Powers 1988). The knights of Avila acquired a fearsome reputation among the Muslims for their brutal ravaging expeditions throughout al-Andalus. Plentiful legislation (*fueros*, royal codes) on the management and distribution of booty shows that these operations were a real way of life for Christians on the frontier. From the mid-12th century, the operational autonomy of the urban militias was reduced as they were increasingly integrated into the major expeditions organized by the monarchy (*fonsado*) (García Fitz 1998: 83).

Chronicles and military treatises allow us to plot the development of these long-distance raids. They were temporary operations, some of up to 45 days. Royal troops, noble armies, town militias and military orders integrated Christian forces that could amount to several thousand men. The figures for knights range from 200 to 1,200, with varying numbers of foot soldiers (from a few to 2,800 or more). Among these figures there could be shepherds, in charge of transporting the cattle, guardians of the spoils and captives (*guardadores*), medical personnel (*físicos*, *maestros de las llagas*) and clergymen. The military leaders remained the *adalides*, who accompanied the king or the army's commander. In the 12th century, the mayor of Toledo, Munio Alfonso, and the *adalid* of Ávila, Sancho Jimeno, were very famous in this respect. They planned operations from the information obtained previously thanks to spies (*barruntes*, *esculcas*, *escusoneros*) or interrogated prisoners. They guided the army, selecting the routes and passes and the most suitable places for the camp. The security and surveillance systems of the army (*atalayas*, *escuchas*) were also under their charge (García Fitz 1998: 135–170).

The prudence of the leaders, careful ground surveillance, vigilance of the enemy and discipline were considered essential for good results. The marching

army could be organized in four columns: the vanguard, rear and two wings of knights ready for combat. The entire army was preceded and flanked by explorers (*descobridores*). The column was never to be broken up, especially when crossing uneven places, which were secured in advance by crossbowmen, foot soldiers and horsemen. During the march, small groups made regular exits to ensure the provision of the host and multiply the effects of the operation. If the column was attacked by the Moors, it was recommended that it be protected at a strong central point and that a pursuit be avoided so as not to fall into the trap of the *tornafuy* ('turn and flee'). Under optimum conditions, a retreating army could turn around and enter enemy territory again. This variant, called *cavalgada doble* or *riedro cavalgada* ('double raid' or 'retro-raid') was considered the most damaging (*Second Partida*).

Attrition war, beyond its immediate economic purpose, could have strategic objectives (García Fitz 1998: 101–119). The famous campaigns of Alfonso I were planned to obtain prestige and to weaken the dominion of the Caliphate of Córdoba on the lands bordering the kingdom of Asturias (Isla 2010: 137–138). In the 11th century, Fernando I and Alfonso VI used raids against the *taifa* kingdoms as a method of extortion and punishment. Raiding warfare also served as a political weapon. Between 1130 and 1145, Emperor Alfonso VII launched a systematic war of attrition to politically destabilize al-Andalus, to demonstrate the inability of the Almoravid authorities to defend the Andalusians. A century later, Fernando III acted in a similar way to deepen the crisis of the Almohad regime in the Peninsula. Another strategic role of the raid was to distract the enemy during an offensive. In 1211, Alfonso VIII sent his son Fernando on a *cavalgada* against Trujillo and Montánchez to ease the situation of the fortress of Salvatierra, besieged by the army of the Almohad caliph.

In the frontier areas, the strategic function of the ravaging and attrition operations was directly related to territorial expansion. The accumulation of damage caused by raids neutralized the offensive potential of the Muslims and exhausted their defensive capacity, paving the way for a direct annexation in the medium and long term. In fact, the conquest of a city was rarely possible without a prior phase of 'softening' through the exhaustion of economic resources and the conquest of the surrounding strong points. The use of this system explains the relatively easy Christian occupation, without sieges, of several cities of north-west Iberia (Chaves, Porto, Coimbra, Astorga) during the 9th century (Isla 2010: 143–148). The conquest of Toledo in 1085 was possible after eight years of ravaging raids. Moreover, Fernando III systematically devastated the environs of Jaén and Seville before starting the siege (García Fitz 1998: 119–126).

Siege warfare

Effective territorial expansion required the control of strongholds, which was a difficult task due to the superiority of defensive over offensive techniques. On a strategic level, the function of the fortified enclaves was not to constitute a barrier, but to offer resistance to the advance of the enemy. Only the dominance of the cities allowed stable control of the territory. At the same time, strongholds constituted bases from which to launch offensive operations of attrition and conquest (García Fitz 1998: 171–277).

There were several methods for taking a fortress. The so-called *a furto* attack consisted of a quick and surprise strike by a small group of expert fighters who took advantage of the night, weather conditions or the carelessness of the garrison, to climb the wall and take the place. Although it was a simple operation and it required few resources, it could produce spectacular results. The conquest of Córdoba by Fernando III in 1236 began when a contingent of frontier forces (*caualleros fijos dalgo*, *adalides*, *almogávares*) occupied an area of the capital at night by exploiting the lack of vigilance of the guards. Another method was by mass assault (*por fuerça*). This could succeed against medium and small targets with reduced garrisons (Malagón, 1211; Loja, 1225), but was generally too risky when attacking cities. An exception was the assault of Almería (1147), explicable due to the size of the Christian army and the effective use of siege engines.

When these systems failed, the attackers initiated a blockade or siege (*cerco*). There was often fighting outside the walls, but the goal was the surrender of the defenders. For this, it was necessary to physically isolate the place, so that hunger, thirst or disease would sink resistance. The effective blockade of a city required a great military, logistical and technical effort (Ladero Quesada 2010: 166–167). The need to concentrate sufficient manpower and means explains why some sieges were combined operations. In 975, troops of the kingdoms of Leon and Pamplona besieged the imposing caliphal citadel of Gormaz (Isla 2010: 201). In the siege of the city of Cuenca (1177), Alfonso VIII counted on the help of the king of Aragon, Alfonso the Chaste. In 1212, the fortress of Calatrava fell thanks to the support of Catalan-Aragonese and ultra-Pyrenean crusaders. Other sieges, such as Almería (1147), Seville (1247–1248) and Algeciras (1279), can be considered joint operations, since naval forces supported ground troops. Supplying the besiegers was also essential. The failures of Alfonso VIII in Baeza (1213) and Alfonso X in Algeciras (1279–1280) can be explained by their incapacity to solve the logistical challenge of a prolonged siege. In places with large garrisons, a sally carried out by the defenders (*espolonadas*) proved a constant danger. The troops of Fernando III

suffered in this respect in the sieges of Jaén (1225 and 1230) and Seville (1248). During a siege, it was indispensable to isolate the place militarily, avoiding the arrival of a relief army. As a rule, when the defenders verified that they would not receive outside aid, they began negotiations to surrender on reasonable terms. This pattern can be observed in the conquest of Toledo by King Alfonso VI (1085); the fall of Valencia (1094) to the famous Castilian leader Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, El Cid; in the taking of Oreja (1139) and Coria (1142) by Alfonso VII; and in the conquests of Capilla (1226) and Jaén (1246) by Fernando III. In Iberia, there was also the custom of agreeing to surrender the place if the defenders were not relieved within a certain period of time (e.g. Salvatierra, 1211).

Regarding siege engines (*engennos*), which we know more about from the 11th century, there are no major differences between Western Iberia and elsewhere. The besiegers approached the walls protected by mantlets (*sarzos*) and mobile wooden sheds (*gatas*, *viñas*), which were used in the sieges of Valle (1130), Coria (1138 and 1142), Oreja (1139), Almería (1147) and Seville (1247–1248). Among the most used assault machines were the rope or wood *escalas*, which were common in attacks *a furto*. The towers or wooden castles, which were structures of several floors and equipped with wheels to reach, while protected, the upper part of the walls, were evidenced in the taking of Lamego by Fernando I (1057) and the sieges of Coria (1138, 1142) and Almería (1147), all of which took place at the time of Alfonso VII. For the destruction of the defences there were several techniques, tools and machines. The battering ram (*boçon*, *buzón*), effective against the gates, is little documented (Coimbra, 1064; Alcaraz, 1213). The demolition of walls and towers was carried out by means of subterranean tunnels to remove the lower rows of stones (*minas*), or by sapping work to undermine the supports of the wall (*cavas*). These techniques were practised in Coria (1142), Malagón (1212) and Seville (1247– 1248). As for artillery barrage, like elsewhere, there are some problems of interpretation. The army of Alfonso VII used *balistas* (missile weapons or catapults?) in Oreja (1138) and Coria (1142). We know that the walls of Alcaraz (1213) and Requena (1219) were assailed by counterweight trebuchets, called *almajaneques* in Castile. However, the sources describing the sieges of Almería (1147), Capilla (1226), Jaén (1230), Algeciras (1279) and Tarifa (1292) speak of *machinas*, *fundibularios*, *fondas* or *algarradas*, terms that prevent us from knowing if we are dealing with engines powered by human traction, fixed counterweight or by mobile counterweight.

FIGURE 3.9 Siege warfare. (Alfonso X, *Cantigas de Santa María*, Cantiga 28, Biblioteca de El Escorial. © Patrimonio Nacional)

Despite their reputation, the engines were not usually decisive in the resolution of a siege. Their technical quality was limited and they were vulnerable to attacks by the besieged (Oreja, 1139; Alcaraz, 1213). Castilian jurists working under the direction of Alfonso X were sceptical about their usefulness in the besieging of cities, considering hunger or surprise attacks to be more effective (*Second Partida*). The siege weapons, however, appear in almost all sieges, which can probably be explained by their psychological effects, as they frightened the defenders and thus contributed to their surrender.

Pitched battles

The armies of the kingdom of Asturias and Leon tended to avoid battles with Muslims, preferring ambushes and small-scale fighting (Isla 2010: 158–160; Ladero Quesada 2010: 122–129). From the 11th century, the battle played a secondary role in Christian expansion strategies. Frontier actions, raids and the forcing of strongholds were more efficient operations to achieve enduring territorial conquests (García Fitz 1998: 279–329). Fernando III, the king of Castile and Leon who was most successful in the war against the Muslims (approximately 104,000 km^2 of conquered territory), never fought in a pitched battle.

It is well known that battles were risky in military and political terms. Several kings died in combat, generating disastrous consequences (Rodrigo in Guadalete, 711) or major changes (Vermudo III in Tamarón, 1037, García Sánchez in Atapuerca, 1054). Therefore, the battle used to take place as a result of other actions. Some direct confrontations were fought to stop an invading

Muslim army – Guadalete (711), Morcuera (865), Valdejunquera (920), the great Battle of Simancas (939), Cervera (1000), Zalaca/Sagrajas (1086), Alarcos (1195) or Moclín (1280). Others occurred during the pursuit of retreating invaders – Lutos (794), Zagbula (1157), Torre del Campo (1275). In the context of siege war, battles occurred when an army of relief arrived – San Esteban de Gormaz (917), Uclés (1108), Alhange (1230) – or when the besieged went out to attack the besiegers – El Cuarte (1094), a great victory of the Cid, a master in battles, over the Almoravids (Ladero Quesada 2010: 167).

Despite the risks, kings and military leaders were aware of the benefits of an open field victory (García Fitz 1998: 329–348; Alvira 2012: 61–83). The Castilian writers reproduce the two sides of the old Vegetian maxim: avoid battle and face it if it can decide a war (Don Juan Manuel: *Libro de los estados*). The warrior ethic, and later the chivalric ethic, with their powerful imagery concerning frontal combat, nourished this consciousness. Moreover, the fascination for the impressive 'liturgical' aspects of a pitched battle should not be forgotten (Alvira 2012: 121–387). Alfonso X the Wise stated that, unlike other direct confrontations (*lid*, *facienda*, *torneo*), one could only speak of *batalla* when two armies were led by kings, formed in battle array and endowed with banners and musical instruments (*Second Partida*). For both practical and psychological reasons, the battle constituted a valid military alternative to ward off an external threat, to eliminate a political rival, to gain legitimacy or to quickly resolve a conflict. This explains several clashes between Christian powers – Llantada (1068), Golpejera (1072), Viadangos (1111) – or the spectacular campaign of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212), the only crusade of the Central Middle Ages organized and preached in order for a pitched battle to be fought (Alvira 2012: 83–111).

At the time of the combat, the choice of terrain was important. In the open field, positions were sought on the basis of height or natural obstacles, and taking into account the position of the sun and the direction of the wind (García Fitz 1998: 367–373). Battles near strongholds were common, especially for those on the defensive (Isla 2010: 195). Face to face, the contenders prepared spiritually and the leaders encouraged their men with a harangue. The armies were deployed in order of battle, which was considered the key factor in the outcome of a direct confrontation. The *Second Partida* describes an ideal organization formed by the avant-garde (*delantera*), centre (*medianera*), flanks (*costaneras*, *alas*, *çitaras*, *açitaras*) and rearguard (*çaga*), which was the natural place for the king for security and command and control of the fight. The fact that the battles of the earlier period were preceded by singular battles between champions (*paladines*) is quite interesting (Ladero Quesada 2010: 123–124).

The sources do not always allow us to know the tactics used in each battle

(García Fitz 1998: 373–403). The Muslim armies relied on harassment at a distance with archers on horseback, simulated flights (*tornafuy*) and manoeuvres enveloping the flanks, but without avoiding hand-to-hand combat with well-armed cavalry and compact formations of infantry. The expert use of these strategies explains their great victories in Zalaca/Sagrajas (1086) and Alarcos (1195) (Huici 1956: 19–82, 135–216). Among Christians, there is evidence of lightly armed horsemen fighting in the Moorish way before the 11th century. Afterwards, cavalry with increasingly complete armour, charging at the enemy in a closed formation, preferentially using the couched lance, prevailed. We have no record of battles in which the knights fought on foot.

The most important and characteristic tactical unit was the squadron (*acies*, *az*), a rectangle of several lines of fighters forming an extended front. Sometimes smaller groups (*mesnaderos*, *conreix*) are mentioned. The *acies* communicated with each other by couriers, sound signals (cries, end-blown horns [*trompas*], trumpets [*añafiles*], horns, drums), and visual signals (banners, crosses). Foot soldiers (*peones*), underestimated by medieval writers, performed fundamental tactical functions such as defending camps, weakening enemy ranks by launching projectiles (slingers, crossbowmen) or protecting cavalry before entering action and between charges. They could also form mixed formations with the knights, with excellent results (Las Navas de Tolosa, 1212).

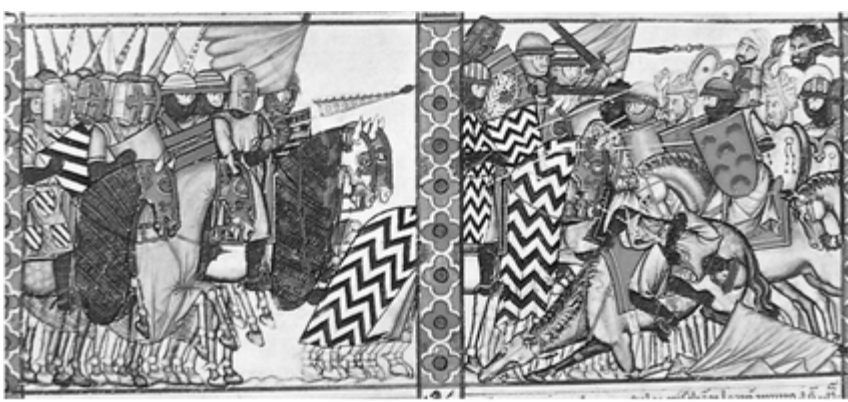


FIGURE 3.10 Pitched battle. (Alfonso X, *Cantigas de Santa María*, Cantiga 63, Biblioteca de El Escorial. © Patrimonio Nacional)

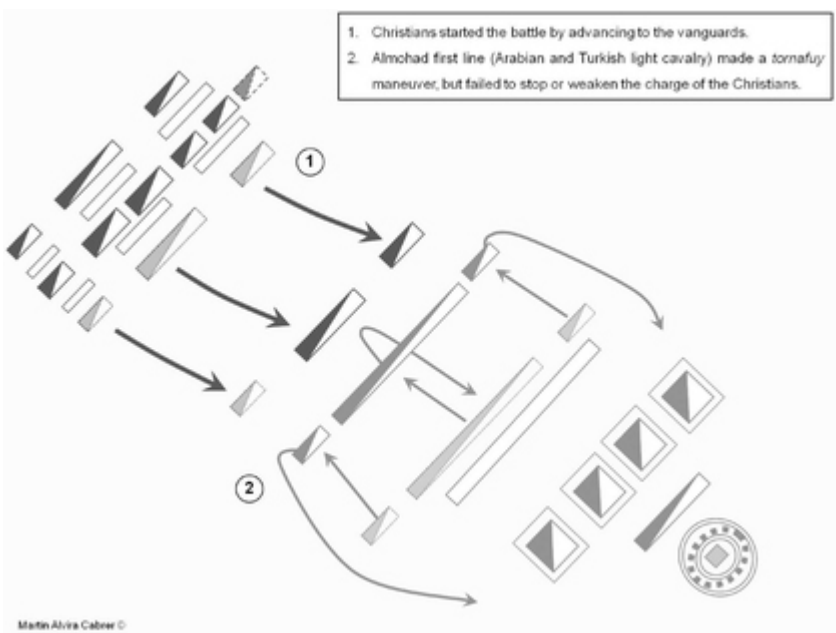
There were other tactical deployments (*Second Partida*, *Libro de los estados*). The so-called *muela* was a defensive formation in a circle used if surrounded. To defend the baggage train, the booty and the person of the king, a square formation called a *muro* ('wall') could be adopted. The *çerca* or *corral*, used by the Almohads in the Battle of Las Navas, was similar. It consisted of a fortified rear position that was defended by foot soldiers with spears resting on the

earth and other formations of slingers, crossbowmen and archers. Being a static position, it served to stimulate the fighting spirit of the whole army. Some cavalry formations are also known. In the Battle of Jerez (1231), the Christians charged in *tropel*, a narrow and compact formation designed to break an enemy thanks to a vanguard of well-armed knights (García Fitz 1998: 390). The wedge (*cunno*) was a triangular deployment with greater capacity of penetration.

The outcome of a pitched battle was not always easy to predict. The texts of the jurists insist on the prudence, the discipline and the preservation of the closed formation, prescribing severe punishments for those who did not comply with the orders. Controlling the men's eagerness for booty was another constant concern (*Second Partida*).

Logistics, supplies and funding

The kingdoms of Castile and Leon lacked an organization during this period that would guarantee their logistical needs and therefore the course of the operations


1. Christians started the battle by advancing to the vanguards.
2. Almohad first line (Arabian and Turkish light cavalry) made a *tornafuy* maneuver, but failed to stop or weaken the charge of the Christians.
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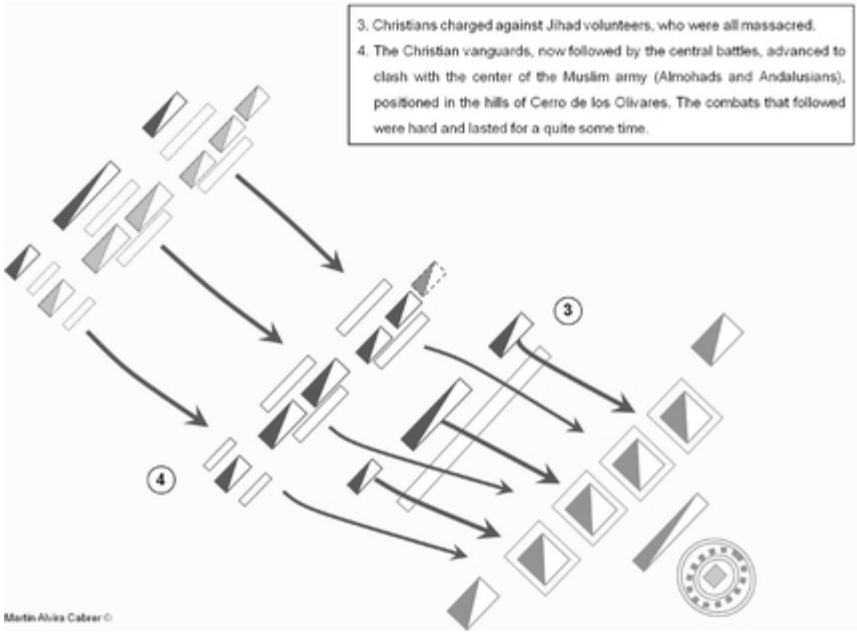
Martín Alvira Cabrer ©


3. Christians charged against Jihad volunteers, who were all massacred.
4. The Christian vanguards, now followed by the central battles, advanced to clash with the center of the Muslim army (Almohads and Andalusians), positioned in the hills of Cerro de los Olivares. The combats that followed were hard and lasted for a quite some time.
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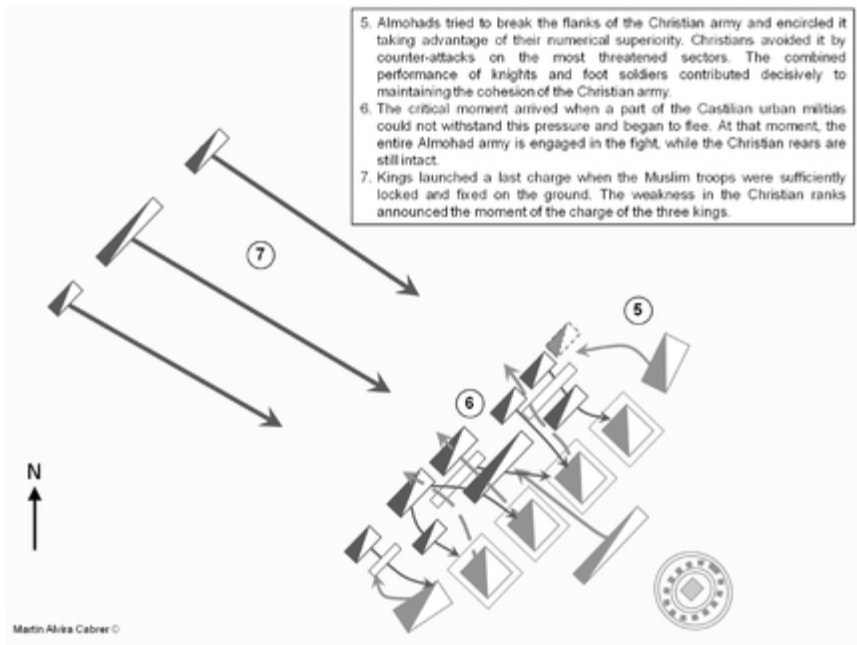
Martin Alvira Cabrer ©


5. Almohads tried to break the flanks of the Christian army and encircled it taking advantage of their numerical superiority. Christians avoided it by counter-attacks on the most threatened sectors. The combined performance of knights and foot soldiers contributed decisively to maintaining the cohesion of the Christian army.
6. The critical moment arrived when a part of the Castilian urban militias could not withstand this pressure and began to flee. At that moment, the entire Almohad army is engaged in the fight, while the Christian rears are still intact.
7. Kings launched a last charge when the Muslim troops were sufficiently locked and fixed on the ground. The weakness in the Christian ranks announced the moment of the charge of the three kings.
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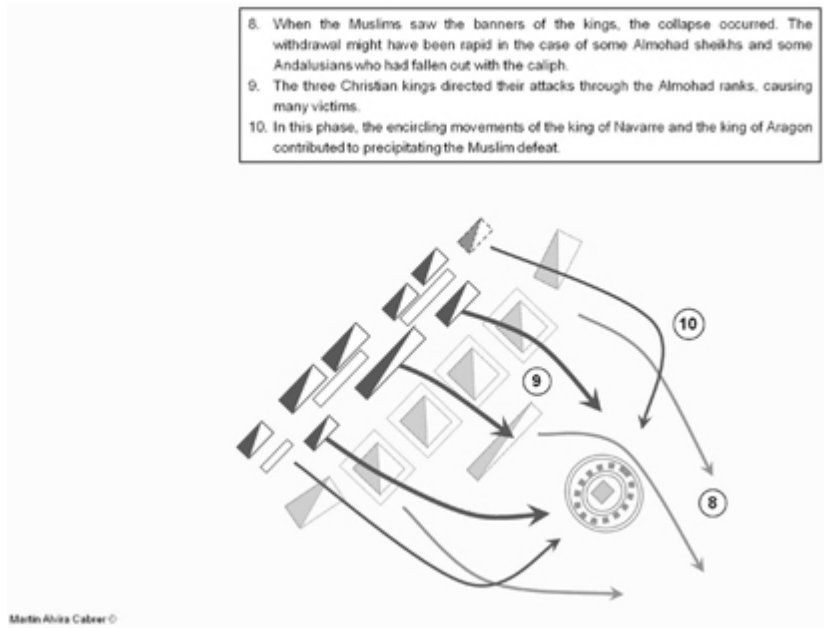
Martin Alvira Cabrer ©


8. When the Muslims saw the banners of the kings, the collapse occurred. The withdrawal might have been rapid in the case of some Almohad sheikhs and some Andalusians who had fallen out with the caliph.
9. The three Christian kings directed their attacks through the Almohad ranks, causing many victims.
10. In this phase, the encircling movements of the king of Navarre and the king of Aragon contributed to precipitating the Muslim defeat.
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Martín Alvira Cabrer ©

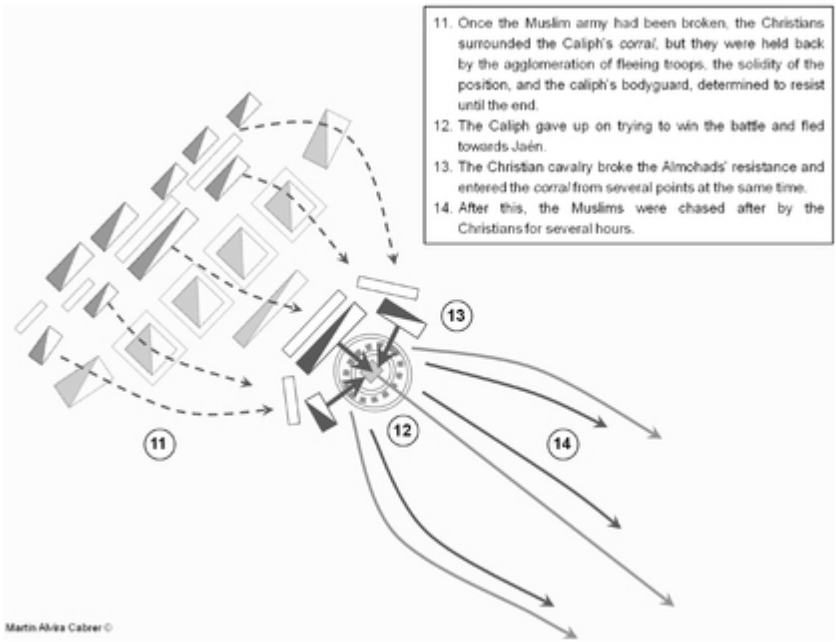
11. Once the Muslim army had been broken, the Christians surrounded the Caliph's *corral*, but they were held back by the agglomeration of fleeing troops, the solidity of the position, and the caliph's bodyguard, determined to resist until the end.
12. The Caliph gave up on trying to win the battle and fled towards Jaén.
13. The Christian cavalry broke the Almohads' resistance and entered the *corral* from several points at the same time.
14. After this, the Muslims were chased after by the Christians for several hours.
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FIGURE 3.11.1 TO 3.11.5 Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212). Battle movements. (© Martín Alvira Cabrer)

was often influenced by difficulties in transport, receiving supplies and funding (García Fitz 2001:113–118; Ladero Quesada 2010: 155–161).

War took place mainly on land, so troops moved on foot, by horse or by mule: a contingent composed exclusively of knights could travel 40 or 50 kilometres in a day, although this distance could increase up to 70 kilometres if their equipment was light. Foot soldiers moved more slowly, travelling distances from 25 to 30 kilometres per day, therefore an army composed of knights and foot soldiers had to match the pace of the latter. If the army was very large in size and had to carry material such as food, arms or tents, its progress was even slower: the army that travelled from Toledo to Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212 did so at an average of 15 to 20 kilometres per day. Furthermore, at least in the case of large armies, the speed also depended on the road conditions, which were usually poor.

The troops being deployed needed to find safe places to set up camp to rest for the night. These camps were equipped with guards as well as certain protection elements and had to be located in places with a source of water, grass for the horses and firewood, avoiding riverbeds or swamps that could be flooded or positions that facilitated enemy attacks. *Adalides*, experienced guides who were familiar with the terrain and had information on the locations and movements of the adversary, played an essential role in the choice of roads and campsites.

Another significant logistical issue was the supply of food for the men and animals, especially when long expeditions were organized, composed of thousands of combatants and mounts. The simplest and most common way to secure supplies for an army was to plunder the regions through which they travelled and to live off the land. The spoils they brought back were kept in a shared storage area and distributed amongst all the contingents, as detailed in the legislation drafted by Alfonso X and in local regulations (*fueros*). This procurement system required that operations take place in spring and summer, when grass and harvests were available, but it had problems and limitations: the larger the contingent and the longer it had to remain in one place, the greater the possibility of exhausting the local resources, so armies were frequently forced to move somewhere else or to lift a siege because they were unable to find provisions on-site. This was the case for Alfonso VIII of Castile during the siege of Baeza in 1213, for example.

Each combatant was allowed to bring with him a part of the food he needed, but the amount of provisions that a warrior could transport was limited and only lasted a few days. For this reason, the authorities were forced to organize supply trains, but the transportation of provisions, weapons and other resources was a complicated operation that required a mule train of thousands of mules – it is estimated that some 10,000 mules would be needed just to transport the feed for 1,000 horses – the trail of which would extend some 10 or 20 kilometres, multiplying the danger of enemy assault. Thus, it is clear that

an army would rarely remain in the field for more than a month and that supply issues were constant.

Funding all these activities was no easy task either for an agricultural economy with limited productivity. To raise this, monarchs could resort to ordinary taxes, which included certain taxes created specifically to pay for war: indeed, the *anubda* and the *castillería* were fees to pay for city limits surveillance services and the construction or repair of fortresses, respectively. The *fonsadera*, in turn, was originally a fine imposed on those who did not fulfil their military obligations, but it eventually became an ordinary tax to finance offensive campaigns.

Given that these ordinary taxes were never enough to cover the cost of war, monarchs often resorted to extraordinary demands that gave rise to new taxes: thus, the *petitum*, which emerged in the 11th century to meet the cost of the war against the Almoravids, had become an ordinary resource for the Crown a century later. Likewise, in the early 13th century, another extraordinary tribute was created to finance war, the *moneda*.

Due to the religious nature of the war against the Muslims, monarchs frequently turned to income from the Church, making use of part of the ecclesiastical tithe, known as *tercias*, sometimes against the will of the ecclesiastical authorities. The preaching of the papal bull on crusading in Castile-Leon also generated income from those who made monetary contributions in exchange for spiritual and penitential benefits, in addition to the contributions sometimes imposed by the Pope on the Hispanic Church, known as the *vigésima*, which represented 5 per cent of ecclesiastical income, originally intended to finance the crusades in the Holy Land.

When needed, monarchs exacted forced loans from the Jewish communities or certain merchants in order to finish some campaigns: this was the case with Alfonso X in his failed attempt to take Algeciras in 1279.

Finally, relations with neighbouring Muslims also generated extraordinary financial resources to fund war: the existence of tributes on Islamic states, called *parias*, in exchange for military protection or for refraining from an attack was quite profitable at times, especially during the early *taifa* kingdoms in the second half of the 11th century or mid-13th century, after the collapse of the Almohad empire. These large quantities of gold were used to pay for war, but there were also direct profits attained in the course of the operations, namely spoils. One fifth of these gains was reserved for the monarch, who thus raised the funds to pay for new operations, while the rest was distributed amongst the warriors in proportion to the armament and equipment each one provided, making war an industry.

Armament

The armament used does not substantially differ from the typology and evolution seen in the rest of Western Europe in terms of both the combatants' individual armament and the machines and other tools used in sieges (Soler 1991).

Knights' armaments had become increasingly complex. Up until the 11th century, the iconography shows a lightly armed cavalry bearing double-edged swords, lightweight lances to be thrown (*jabalinas*, or javelins), bows, round shields, often without a helmet or wearing a leather helmet that only protected the top of the head, and often without a lorica. This military equipment started to become more complex in the 11th century as a result of the success of a new battle technique that turned the cavalry into a shock weapon, the impact of which sent the enemy ranks into disarray with the force of the horse and horseman. In order for the charge to be effective, horsemen needed not only a longer, stronger lance, which they lodged in their underarms, but also heavier equipment to protect them properly at the time of the clash, thus rendering them armoured warriors: the saddle was made higher and the stirrups longer for better stability, and the use of loricas or coats of mail became commonplace. These coats were made of interwoven rings that initially only covered the torso, arms and legs down to the knees but were eventually completed with an aventail, called *almófar*, and mail chausses – *brafonera* – that protected the lower legs and feet. By the second half of the 13th century, the coats of mail had begun to be reinforced with rigid metal plates, shields became longer and heavier and helmets were made of metal and tended to enclose and cover the entire head. This equipment was completed with a double-edged sword and, sometimes, with a mace, while 13th-century iconography, and miniatures of certain codices of Alfonso X's *Cantigas de Santa María*, began to depict horses protected with leather and mail chaffrons or padded garments.

Despite the success of the heavy cavalry, the light cavalry still held great military relevance because the equipment used and the method of battle were well adapted to those of the Muslim enemies and frontier war customs. Along with lighter equipment, comprising a javelin, leather protection and smaller shields, one typical feature was the kind of stirrup used, shorter than that of the heavy cavalry, enabling horsemen to manoeuvre more easily in a riding style known as *a la jineta*, which was likely of Muslim origin.

There were no major changes in the armament of the foot soldiers, who usually carried a lightweight lance or javelin, sword and bow. They were frequently depicted in iconography carrying a small round shield and wearing

a cone-shaped helmet with nose-guard and, occasionally, a coat of mail. Over time, the use of the crossbow gradually became more prevalent. This was a weapon that was perfected by means of a stirrup that made it possible to load more quickly and to build the arms with stronger materials, which also gave it greater shooting power.

In addition to individual armament, they had machines and instruments that were used collectively during sieges, although the types and ways of using them – as explained in the section on Siege warfare – did not differ from the rest of Europe.

Fortifications

The toponym *Castilla* (Castile) reflects a two-fold historical reality: the omnipresence of war on the borders and the construction of castles as a strategy to ward off external threats. Given the superiority of defensive tactics over offensive ones, any human group in a fortified position could defend themselves, as they had the advantage of being protected by a wall and of being in a higher position. Therefore, the leaders and inhabitants of the kingdoms of Castile and of Leon, who were compelled to fight against their Muslim and Christian neighbours – from Portugal, Navarre and Aragon – as well as dealing with all kinds of internal conflicts, systematically implemented a policy of building fortresses (Ladero Quesada 2010: 385–389).

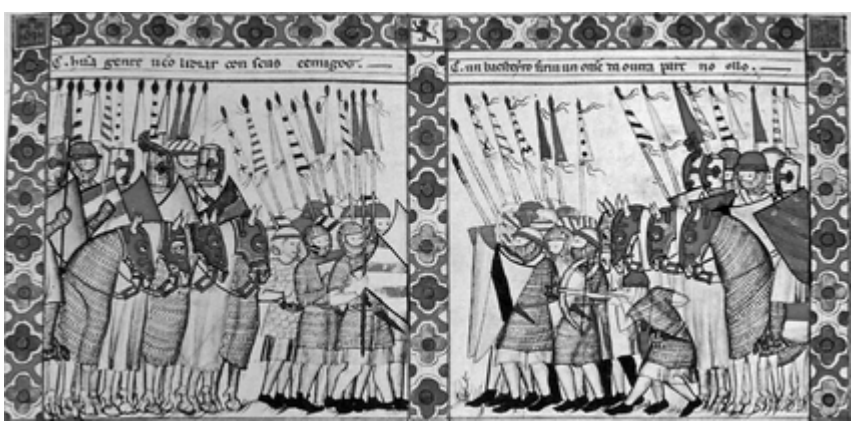


FIGURE 3.12 Knights' and foot soldiers' armament. (Alfonso X, *Cantigas de Santa María*, Cantiga 129, Biblioteca de El Escorial. © Patrimonio Nacional)

These buildings were tremendously diverse in type as regards their position (elevated, on flat land, etc.) and their layout (regular, irregular, adapted to the terrain), as well as their construction materials (adobe, brick, masonry, ashlars,

etc.), size and functionality. The most common and characteristic constructions include city walls, which served to defend the city and to demarcate its jurisdiction. The oldest ones were a direct legacy of the Roman walled settlements, such as those in Lugo or Leon. However, starting in the 11th century new cities founded in sparsely populated areas like Avila and Salamanca were also equipped with walls. As the kingdoms of Leon and Castile progressed southward, they left the walls of the Muslim cities intact, as was the case in Toledo, Badajoz and Seville, for example. Furthermore, many villages or small hamlets also had defensive fortifications, and the rural habitat was, thus, often associated with the presence of a fortress. In turn, the members of the nobility, as well as the military orders and ecclesiastical authorities, frequently built castles that would become their power base, from which they exerted their political and economic power over the territories within the noble jurisdiction. Watchtowers or *atalayas* were erected throughout the territory, but particularly in border regions.

The importance of these fortifications lay not only in the decisive military roles they played – protection and defence of the population, platforms for organizing offensive actions, etc. – but also in the fact that they performed many other economic functions, as hubs for farming development, markets and tax collection centres, as well as administrative and political purposes, such as centres of power. Therefore, castles, walled cities and other fortified settlements became key features in the development of armed conflicts, especially where territorial expansion was intended, given that rule over a territory and the people that lived there required control of these strongholds.

Naval warfare

Most war operations took place on land, so during this period the organization of a military navy was not a priority in military policy (Ladero Quesada 2010: 428–435). When leaders needed a fleet to reach a certain military target, they hired the services of other maritime powers. This was the case with the Bishop of Santiago, Diego Gelmírez who, in around 1120, contracted ship builders and experts in nautical arts from Genoa and Pisa to neutralize the Muslim attacks on the coast of Galicia. Another example is when Alfonso VII sought the aid of Genoese and Catalan ships in 1147 to conquer Almería.

The need to have a navy at their disposal was spotlighted in the siege of Seville: even though it is not a coastal city, its location on the left bank of the Guadalquivir River facilitated the arrival of rescue forces from North Africa and provisions brought to the city over a bridge from lands located to the west.

To block the river and destroy the bridge, Ferdinand III ordered a fleet to be organized in the early months of 1247 at several seaports on the Cantabrian Sea, placing Ramón Bonifaz in charge of this. The participation of the fleet was decisive for the first time in the history of war of the kingdom of Leon and Castile against the Muslims (García Fitz 2000).

A stable navy corps would not be organized until the reign of Alfonso X. Two circumstances brought this about: on the one hand, the plans for a crusade in Africa that this monarch had devised and defended, and on the other, the arrival of a new threat from North Africa, the Marinids, which meant the need to control passage through the Strait of Gibraltar. A fleet had to be created and manned with a crew large enough to make it functional, and to this end Alfonso X ordered the construction of the shipyard in Seville between 1252 and 1253 and appointed the first admiral to be in charge of commanding the fleet. By 1260, the Castilian navy was seemingly operative, as evidenced by the maritime expedition to the Moroccan port of Salé. It did not yet represent a major naval power, but it was enough to threaten the Marinids in 1275, after their first invasion, by blocking their return journey across the Strait. By 1279, the fleet managed to aid in the naval blockade that Alfonso X imposed on the port of Algeciras during his siege on the city. Although the operation ultimately failed and the Castilian fleet was destroyed, the fact remains that in the 'Battle of the Strait' navy power would prove decisive in accomplishing Castile's military objectives.

However, the kingdom still needed to hire ships and sailors from other kingdoms. In 1284–1285, to block the lines of communication between the two shores of the Strait and force the Marinids to end their expeditions to the Peninsula, Sancho IV resorted not only to Castilian ships from the ports of the Cantabrian Sea but also to a Genoese fleet commanded by admiral Micer Benito Zacarías. The same thing happened in 1292, when he conquered Tarifa with the vital aid of ships from Genoa and Aragon.

Ideology of war

In the conflict against the Muslims, Iberian societies held an ideology of war that served to legitimize the monarch's supremacy – making him a leader in the war against Islam –, to morally and politically justify violence against the neighbouring infidels and to mobilize society as a whole in this mission, offering them convincing, stimulating and praiseworthy reasons to fight and, if need be, die.

This ideology was defined in two separate but inter-related concepts: the

Reconquista and the *Crusade* (O'Callaghan 2003: 1–22; García Fitz 2010). The first of these is older chronologically and specifically Hispanic in origin. The kingdom of Leon-Castile undeniably played an important role in its creation, given that its earliest expression appears back in the chronicles written in the 9th century at the court of the kingdom of Asturias and, later, its heirs in Castile-Leon would assume it as their own.

In this ideology of re-conquest, Asturian monarchs and Christian settlers in the north of the Peninsula are depicted as the legitimate heirs of the Visigoths. In the early 8th century, the Muslims invaded the Peninsula and brought the reign of the Visigoths to an end, violently snatching their land from them. Their heirs felt entitled and, indeed, obliged to recover what had belonged to their ancestors, which the Muslims unjustly held onto by force. Thus, as long as the Islamic powers continued to occupy any part of the former Visigothic kingdom, those who considered themselves their legitimate heirs had to fight against the illegitimate occupants until they were expelled or destroyed.

This way of legitimizing the war against Islam, in which historical and legal grounds were combined, is closely related to the concept of a 'just war' as it was known in the Middle Ages. Any kingdom, people or nation was entitled to wage war to recover the properties that an enemy had taken away by force, to defend their territory if threatened, to expel an invader or to avenge an injury caused by an adversary. Consequently, the war against Islam was conceived of as a just war.

Moreover, according to this interpretation, the Muslims had not only brought the kingdom of the Visigoths to an end and invaded their lands, but they had also destroyed the Lord's Church. Therefore, the people of Asturias, Leon and Castile did not hesitate to consider the war against Islam as a process for recovering the Church. They would henceforth fight in the name of God, under His guidance and protection, in His service and against His enemies. In sum, such a war was not only just, but also holy.

This ideology was compounded as of the late 11th century by the idea of the *Crusade*. Originally, the crusades were military expeditions backed, blessed and indulgenced by the Roman pontiffs, who granted remission of confessed sins and pardon of penances, in addition to certain legal guarantees, to anyone who took up the cross and joined these missions that aspired to defend Christianity, avenge damage incurred on Christians and the Church, recover Jerusalem, and expand the frontiers of the Catholic faith. Those who died in the endeavour were reserved the best possible compensation: entry into the Kingdom of Heaven.

FIGURE 3.13 Holy war against the Muslims: religious symbols in battle. (Alfonso X, *Cantigas de Santa María*, Cantiga 181, Biblioteca de El Escorial. © Patri-monio Nacional)

It was not long before the Roman pontiffs began to grant the same penitential and spiritual privileges to combatants that also fought in defence of faith or against the enemies of the Church in other places, as was the case with the Hispanic borders, which soon became a 'crusade front'. Consequently, the influence of the idea of the crusade further reinforced the religious interpretation of the already existing war in Castile-Leon and other kingdoms in the Peninsula. Many of the campaigns waged on the Castile-Leon soil from that time on were supported by the pontiffs, who granted them the status of crusades: for example, the operations that led to the conquest of Almería (1147), Cuenca (1177) and Seville (1248), the failed sieges of Caceres (1218 and 1222) and Requena (1219), or the expeditions that, with diverse outcomes, would lead to the battles of Alarcos (1195) and Las Navas de Tolosa (1212).

The *Reconquista* and the *Crusade* were, thus, two different ideological proposals that had shared elements. They never became mixed together but it is clear that, on more than one occasion, the two concepts overlapped. The result of all this was the consolidation of an ideology of war that would remain valid until the end of the 15th century.

Main campaigns

Since the 8th century, the kingdom of Asturias had been engaging in conflicts against other Christian communities and towns in the north of the Peninsula, just as the kingdoms of Leon and Castile did in the 11th to 13th centuries with Portugal, Navarre and Aragon, and amongst themselves during the periods in which they were independent kingdoms. However, the most representative military campaigns can be found in the long sequence of confrontations that took place with the Muslims of al-Andalus.

First battles: Covadonga (718 or 722)

Traditional historiography has it that the first major military operation in the fight between Christians and Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula took place in the mountains of Asturias, in a place called *Covadonga*. This was where part of the local population had sought refuge after rebelling against Islamic domination, under the leadership of a figure named Pelayo. When the Muslim ruler of the region attempted to put an end to the rebellion, he sustained a serious defeat, which is considered the starting point for the *Reconquista*. However, almost everything known about this operation is uncertain: specialists do not agree on the exact date – 718 or 722? – or on the identity of Pelayo and his followers – were they Asturians, Goths, or a mixture of the two? – or the magnitude and consequences of the armed clash – was it actually a decisive battle for the start of the *Reconquista*, or a mere skirmish? Thus, the Battle of *Covadonga* has more of a symbolic meaning than a strictly military one (Isla 2010: 127–128).

Conquest of Toledo (1085)

Although the kingdom of Asturias and its heir, the kingdom of Leon, were responsible for a significant territorial expansion to the south of the Cantabrian Mountains and the Douro River Valley, the fact remains that until the second half of the 11th century, this expansion was the result of an agricultural colonization policy more than a process of conquests or military successes. It would not be until the aforementioned date that, within the context of a progressive weakening of the *taifa* kingdoms after the collapse of the caliphate in Cordova, the first military campaigns with significant territorial results would take place. In 1057–1058, Ferdinand I of Castile-Leon conquered Lamego and Viseu and, in 1064, he took Coimbra after subjecting it to a siege. However, the operation which, within this context, had the greatest political and territorial implications was the conquest in 1085 of the former capital of the Visigoths, Toledo.

This campaign exemplifies the great possibilities for success afforded by the application of a strategy of indirect approach, based on progressive attrition of the adversary's military and financial resources and on instigating its internal weaknesses. In this case, the systematic collection of tributes (*parias*) over more than a decade, in increasing amounts imposed by Alfonso VI of Castile and Leon on the sovereigns of Toledo in exchange for military support in their conflicts against other *taifa* kingdoms or against their internal competitors not

only gradually impoverished the population of the kingdom of Toledo, but also generated growing internal discontent, which led the governing dynasty to be overthrown. When the monarch of Castile-Leon finally decided to lay siege on the city in 1082, the population's military resistance, financial resources and moral strength were already so worn down that he accomplished the surrender of Toledo without the use of mass force: the city was surrounded until May 1085 but there is no evidence of the development of large-scale military operations; rather, frequent raids of destruction and plundering progressively weakened the resistance of the people of Toledo. Thus, a sort of 'low intensity' violence was used, which managed to slowly and progressively break down the adversary until they were in a position in which resistance became unfeasible. The advantageous conditions that Alfonso VI offered the inhabitants of Toledo to achieve their capitulation – allowing the Muslim population to remain, respecting their freedom, property, taxation, customs and religion – undoubtedly facilitated one of the most important conquests of the period and tremendous territorial expansion, from the Central System Mountain Range to the lands of La Mancha, which might have been impossible using only force and direct, mass confrontation (Ladero Quesada 2010: 194–195).

Battle of Zalaca (1086)

The political, territorial and military success of the conquest of Toledo and the growing belligerent aggressiveness shown by Alfonso VI against other *taifa* kingdoms prompted some of these kingdoms to seek military aid from a recently consolidated Berber empire in North Africa, the Almoravid Empire. In the summer of 1086, the Almoravid army crossed the Strait of Gibraltar and, allied with the *taifa* kingdoms of Seville, Granada and Badajoz, travelled northward. Alfonso VI did not wait until the Muslims had entered his kingdom, but instead went to head them off near the city of Badajoz, where the Islamic army had set up camp. There, on 23 October 1086, the Battle of Zalaca or Sagrajas took place, in which the forces of Castile-Leon were defeated.

Very few details of this pitched battle are known, but the closest sources suggest that the charge of the Christian heavy cavalry clashed with the Islamic vanguard while, at the same time, the Almoravid rearguard moved to surround them, achieving the destruction of the Christian camp and attacking them from behind. Despite their success, the battle did not have major military or territorial consequences as the North Africans immediately retreated from the Peninsula. This operation is a perfect example of a pitched battle in which

the risks accepted by the parties were not offset by the accomplishment of any political or territorial objective whatsoever (Huici 1956: 19–82).

El Cid: Conquest of Valencia (1094)

In fact, it would not be until the following decade that the Almoravids would begin to take control over al-Andalus, although their expansion within the Iberian Peninsula was temporarily halted by the activities of Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, El Cid, who managed to take Valencia, one of the most important cities of al-Andalus. This campaign represents a model for the conquest of a large, well-defended walled city. During the first stage of the siege, from the fortress at Puig, some 15 kilometres north of Valencia, his army devoted itself to wearing down the financial resources of the people of Valencia between the end of 1092 and the spring of 1093. They would do this by perpetrating constant cavalry raids of destruction and plundering of the outlying rural areas. In the second stage, starting in June 1093, Cid's troops moved their position forward and located their camps near the walls of the city, thus blocking entry and exit and causing a growing shortage of food supplies. Hopes that an Almoravid army would rescue them encouraged the Valencians to resist for months under pitiful conditions, but in the end, the outside aid never arrived and, driven by hunger, the city's inhabitants were forced to surrender in June 1094 (Ladero Quesada 2010: 197–198).

Conquest of Almería (1147)

El Cid's rule over Valencia delayed Almoravid expansion for several years but finally, by the first decade of the 12th century, the Berber empire's control over al-Andalus was complete, while not very long-lasting. Military pressure from the Christian kingdoms on the borders, the appearance of another coalition of tribes – the Almohads – in the Maghreb and the growing rivalry between Andalusi and Almoravid groups in the Iberian Peninsula prompted a crisis in the Almoravid empire in the mid-12th century, leading to a new phase of political fragmentation of al-Andalus and facilitating the military advancement of the Christians. It was in this setting that, taking advantage of the human and military resources mobilized throughout Europe under the Pope's call to the Second Crusade, several Iberian monarchs achieved spectacular military successes such as the conquest of Lisbon in 1147 and that of Tortosa in 1148, in addition to Alfonso VII's achievement of the conquest of

Almería, one of the main Muslim ports in the western Mediterranean. The kings of Castile-Leon and Aragon warmly welcomed the initiative taken by the seafaring republics of Genoa and Pisa, who had trading interests in the area. In late July 1147, a Pisan-Genoese fleet consisting of 63 galleys and another 163 ships, as well as a Catalan fleet of 53 ships, gathered off the coast of Almería, joined shortly thereafter by the ground troops of Castile-Leon and Aragon. After the fleet accomplished the maritime blockage of the port of Almería, ground assault operations began in mid-August, for which diverse types of siege engines were used – *gatas*, a wooden tower – and a machine used to launch stones – *mangana* –, with which they managed to destroy part of the wall and take two towers. Finally, on 17 October 1147, the attack took place, causing an authentic massacre. From a military perspective, this was one of the few times that, within the context of Castile-Leon, a forceful attack against a large city was successful (O'Callaghan 2003: 44–46).

The great battles: Alarcos (1195) and Las Navas de Tolosa (1212)

The disappearance of the Almoravids gave way to the integration of al-Andalus into another North African empire, that of the Almohads, which managed to become completely settled in the Peninsula during the second half of the 12th century. The belligerent unrest on the southern borders of the kingdoms of Castile and of Leon increased notably with their presence, but the two military campaigns that undoubtedly had the greatest repercussions were those that led to two major pitched battles with highly differing results: that of Alarcos (1195) and that of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212).

After several decades of fighting on the borders with alternating fate, in the early 1190s the Almohad caliph, Abu Yūsuf Ya'qūb *al-Manṣūr* launched a series of successful campaigns against the Christian kingdoms of the Peninsula. In June 1195, the chosen military target was the kingdom of Castile, although its monarch, Alfonso VIII, was prepared to prevent the Almohad army from crossing the border. In this endeavour, he had military support from his neighbours, Alfonso IX of Leon and Sancho VII of Navarre, but the rush to prevent an Almohad advance prompted him to set off before his allied reinforcements had reached Toledo. From this city, he headed south, where he met the Muslim contingents in mid-July near the walls of the Alarcos fortress.

The battle took place on 19 July 1195 and ended in a resounding defeat for Castile due to both the tactical errors committed by Alfonso VIII and the wise moves by the Almohad caliph. The former was at a numerical disadvantage,

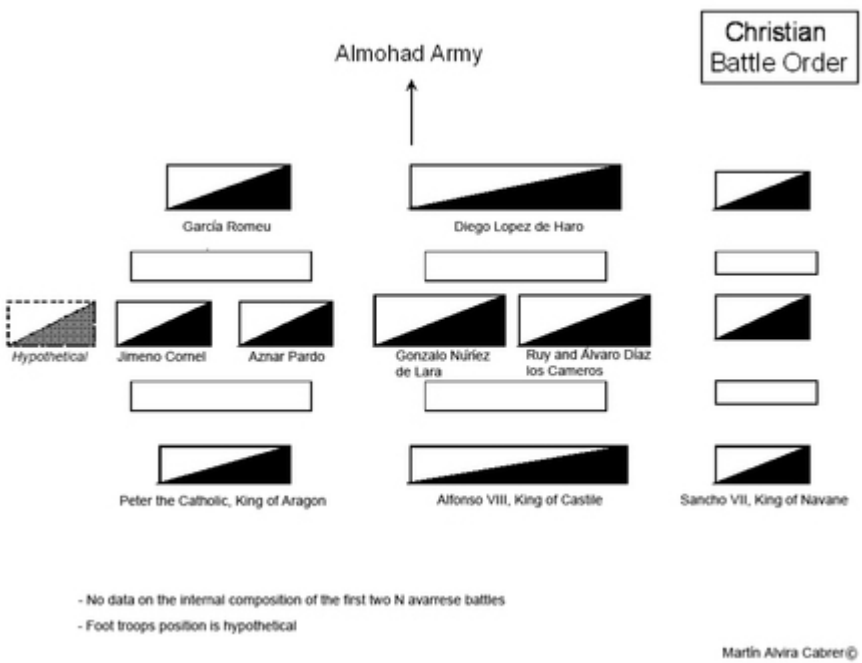
inter alia, because he had not waited for the arrival of reinforcements from Leon and Navarre; the Castilian troops had been drawn up into battle formation and spent an entire day under the heat of the Hispanic summer, awaiting an attack by the Almohads that never took place; the following day when the Almohads marched forward they caught the Castilians by surprise and the latter reacted in a disorganized manner. On the other hand, the Almohads had arranged their formation carefully, dividing their army into five corps – a vanguard, a middle guard, two wings and a rearguard. The Muslim attack began by launching arrows, which caused significant losses among the Christian knights and disorganized their charge, which was blocked by the Almohad middle guard. Finally, the Muslim wings and rearguard moved to surround the Christians, destroying their camp and attacking the Castilians from behind. The outcome of the defeat was significant. The Almohads took over some of the fortresses that controlled the road connecting Toledo to Cordova and, in the following two years, almost all of the territory located south of the Tagus River was lost (Huici 1956: 135–216).

It took the Castilians 17 years to recover from this enormous defeat and they only accomplished this in 1212, when they managed to destroy the Almohad army in the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa. After the disaster at Alarcos, they were forced to sign truces with the Almohads, and these remained in force until 1210. At that time, Alfonso VIII began to reassert his military initiative on the borders, but the ensuing Almohad response led to the conquest of the castle of Salvatierra in 1211. This loss, which profoundly shook all of Christendom, led the king of Castile to organize a major campaign expressly intended to enter into conflict with the Almohad caliph in a pitched battle. Preparations began in late 1211 and were backed by Pope Innocence III, who ordered the preaching of a crusade, and had collaboration from other Christian monarchs, some of whom, like Pedro II of Aragon and Sancho VII of Navarre, became personally involved in leading their troops. The crusading army that met in Toledo in May 1212 was the largest in number to gather in Castile up to that time: although several thousand French crusaders abandoned the expedition, at the time the battle took place, the Christians formed a contingent of 4,000 knights and 8,000 foot soldiers.

The crusaders headed south in mid-June and conquered several important fortresses along the way: Malagon, Calatrava, Alarcos, Caracuel, Benavente and Piedrabuena. By 12 July they reached Sierra Morena, the passes of which were blocked by the Almohad army, which had set up camp on the other side of the mountains. The caliph's goal was to prevent an advance by the Christians, prompt their retreat and take advantage of the ensuing confusion and demoralization to attack them, but the crusading army found a path down the mountain, forcing the Muslims into a pitched battle. The encounter finally

took place on 16 July 1212 and the properly executed charges by the Christian heavy cavalry – arranged into a vanguard, a middle guard, two wings and a rearguard – turned out to be more effective in the battle than the attempts of the Muslim light cavalry to surround them, than the action of their mounted archers and than the strength of their fortified camp.

The Almohad defeat was resounding and has long been considered a decisive battle in the fight between Christians and Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula. It is true that the Almohad Empire did not immediately fall into crisis as a result of the disaster on the battlefield, but its consequences were obvious: in addition to the moral effects on the defeated, the Castilians managed to take control over the territory between the Tagus River and Sierra Morena, paving the way to conquer the Guadalquivir Valley (Alvira 2012).


Almohad Army
Christian Battle Order
García Romeu
Diego Lopez de Haro
Hypothetical
Jimeno Cornel
Aznar Pardo
Gonzalo Núñez de Lara
Ruy and Álvaro Díaz los Cameros
Peter the Catholic, King of Aragon
Alfonso VIII, King of Castile
Sancho VII, King of Navarre
- No data on the internal composition of the first two N avarrese battles
- Foot troops position is hypothetical
Martín Alvira Cabrer©

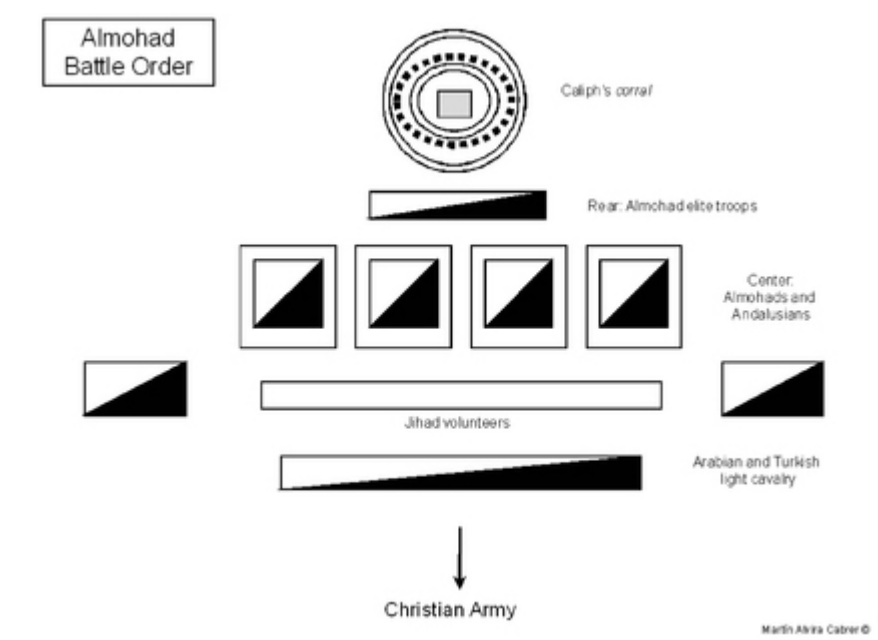


FIGURE 3.14.1 TO 3.14.2 Christian and Muslim battle orders in Las Navas de Tolosa (1212). (© Martín Alvira Cabrer)

FIGURE 3.15 Strategic consequences of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212–1214). (© Martín Alvira Cabrer)

The conquest of Seville (1248)

Just 12 years after this defeat, the Almohads fell into a serious crisis from which they would never recover. At that time, divisions between the Almohad sheikhs arose and, later, the third *taifa* kingdoms were established. The Christian kingdoms to the north took advantage of these circumstances to implement unprecedented territorial expansion: the southern borders of the kingdom of Leon, ruled by Alfonso IX, were pushed forward from the Tagus River to the Guadiana River thanks to the conquests of Caceres, Badajoz and Mérida (1229–1230). In turn, between 1224 and 1230, the king of Castile, Ferdinand III, managed to extend his power over the upper Guadalquivir River Valley with the annexation of Martos, Andujar, Baeza and other towns, but the greatest leap forward would begin in 1230, when the kingdoms of Leon and Castile were reunited again under his rule: a policy of systematic campaigns of destruction and plundering, together with a series of sieges on large cities of al-Andalus (Ubeda in 1233, Cordova in 1236 and Jaen in 1246), enabled him to incorporate much of the Guadalquivir River Valley into his kingdom, compounded by the annexation of the kingdom of Murcia in 1243 (O'Callaghan 2003: 83–98, 105–112).

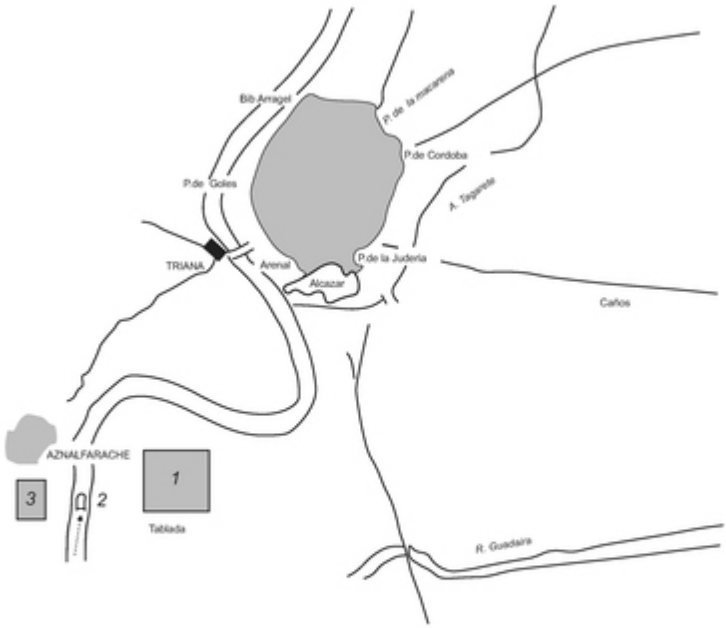
By late 1246, one of the most important rulers of al-Andalus, the king of Granada, had entered into a vassalage agreement with the ruler of Castile, thus rendering Seville the only major Muslim city in the south of the Peninsula to remain independent. The conquest of Seville was the largest military operation undertaken by Ferdinand III. It was a highly populated city with a very rich agricultural community on the outskirts, defended by a large walled enclosure and numerous other fortresses in the vicinity to help protect it and by the Guadalquivir River which, in addition to physically protecting a part of the city, also provided a means of communication that guaranteed the arrival of military aid from North Africa (García Fitz 2000).

A siege of the city would require not only blocking its entrances and exits on land by setting up a series of camps, but also conquering some of the castles in the vicinity first, preventing the arrival of provisions from the region further west, the *Aljarafe*, over a boat bridge and taking control of the river to prevent the arrival of aid from Africa. To accomplish this, it was necessary to mobilize a large number of ground troops – estimated at some 3,000 to 4,000 knights and 8,000 to 10,000 foot soldiers – as well as a fleet of 13 ships with a crew of more than 1,000 men.

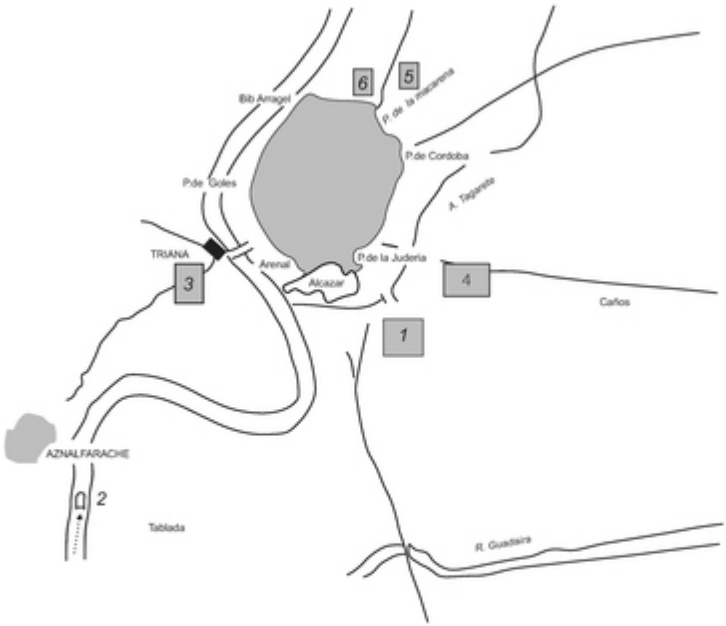
It was the longest and most complex operation in Iberian military history. It began in the autumn of 1246 with an initial campaign that ended with the conquest of the castle of Alcala de Guadaira. In the early months of 1247, the

Castilian naval fleet arrived, which had managed to block the passage of rescue forces sent from North Africa on the Guadalquivir River during the spring. That same spring, the besieging army departed from Cordova, conquering the main fortresses on the banks of the Guadalquivir River along the way – Lora, Cantillana, Guillena, Gerena and Alcala del Rio. In August, the first Castilian camp was set up outside the walls of the city, and others were arranged in the vicinity in the following months. Raids carried out by the defenders on these camps and attempts by the attackers to storm the walls were frequent, but neither was definitive in the course of the siege. Finally, in May 1248, the Castilian ships managed to break through the boat bridge, cutting them off completely. Shortly afterwards, negotiations began for the surrender of the city, which finally took place on 23 November 1248, thus putting the conquest of the Guadalquivir River Valley to an end.

Alfonso X continued his father's conquest work, putting an end to the Muslim political centres still in existence south of Seville, in the Guadalete River Valley, and to the west, in the kingdom of Niebla. However, his policy of placing pressure on the Mudejar communities ended up leading to a major rebellion in 1264, which prompted not only the outbreak of war against Granada but also the presence of North African troops sent by a new Berber empire, the Marinids. The latter led a series of campaigns of destruction that affected the entire Guadalquivir Valley in 1275, 1277, 1279 and 1285, but which did not result in Muslim territorial expansion. However, their control over certain ports, such as Tarifa and Algeciras, compelled Alfonso X and Sancho IV to consider conquering these strongholds through ground and naval sieges, leading to the conquest of Tarifa in 1292, although there is very little detailed evidence of the military development of this event.



1.- Fernando III's Camp
2.- Ramon Bonifaz' Fleet
3.- Master of the Order of Santiago's Camp



1.- Fernando III's Camp
2.- Ramon Bonifaz' Fleet
3.- Camp against Triana
4.- Infante D. Alfonso's Camp
5.- Diego Lopez de Haro's Camp
6.- Rodrigo Gomez de Galicia's Camp

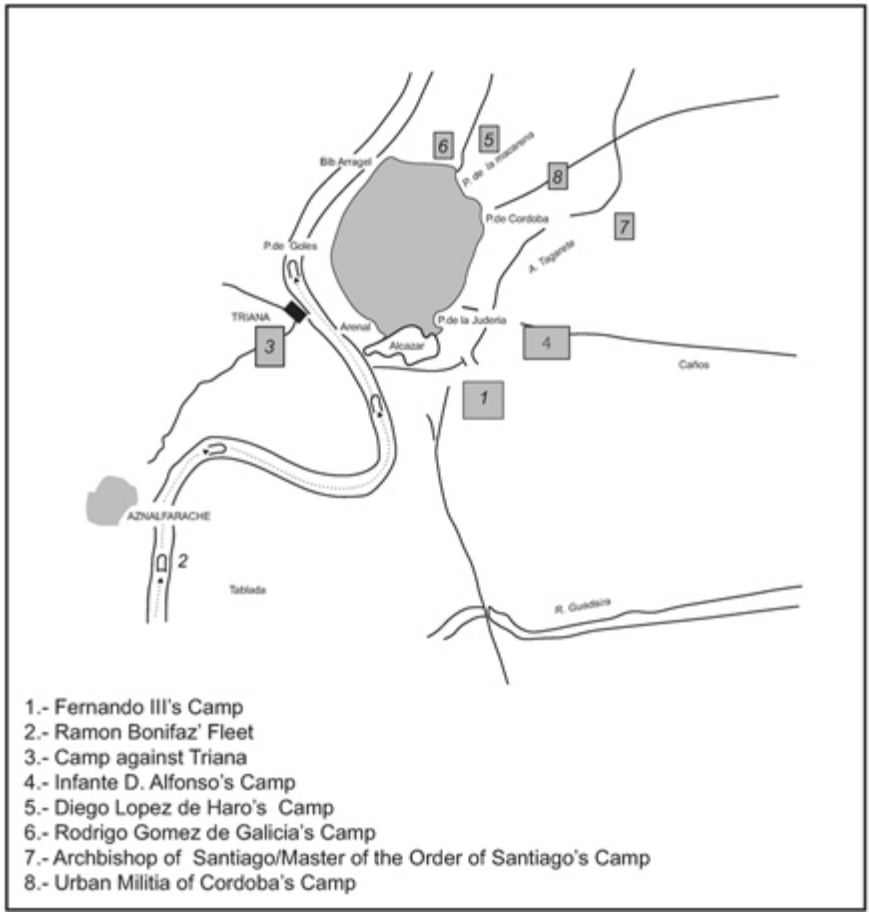


FIGURE 3.16.1 TO 3.16.3 Siege of Sevilla (1247–1248). (© Francisco García Fitz)

II Late Middle Ages (14th to 15th Centuries)

Fernando Arias Guillén

Political outline

In 1300, the Castilian-Leonese monarchy was on the verge of breaking up due to an underage king whose legitimacy was called into question.[2] The ensuing two centuries, however, saw this fragile situation change dramatically. Indeed, the Crown's increased military and economic capacity would be a symptom of the strengthening of royal power. By the end of the 15th century, Castile had

completed the *Reconquista* by taking Granada, the last Muslim kingdom of the Iberian Peninsula. Furthermore, a fledgling American expansion had begun. The marriage of Isabel and Fernando in 1469 would be the seed of a new transoceanic empire: the Hispanic Monarchy.

The Treaty of Torrellas (1304) allowed young Fernando IV (r. 1295–1312) to keep the Crown against the intentions of his cousin, Alfonso de la Cerda. Despite maintaining the unity of the kingdoms, the king had to forgo part of Murcia to Jaime II of Aragon, who had until then been supporting the pretender. After decades of political instability, the reign of Alfonso XI (r. 1312–1350) became a key moment in the consolidation of royal authority in Castile. Apart from his military successes around the Strait of Gibraltar, the king was able to involve the nobility in his political project. There are two examples that can illustrate this ambition: the *Ordenamiento de Alcalá* (1348) established the primacy of royal legislative authority, and the short-lived Order of the Band (1332), which was a military order designed to solidify the dependence of the nobility on the king. The arrival of the Black Death was disastrous for the Iberian Peninsula, and so too for the king, who died because of it in 1350. The profound social and economic changes that the plague would cause in Castile were borne witness by the legislation passed by the *Cortes* in 1351, which attempted to stem the unstoppable rise in salaries and prices.

Pedro I (r. 1350–1369) lacked the political ability of his father, and he proved incapable of preserving his legacy. His reign was fraught with two conflicts, a long war with Aragon – known as the War of the Two Pedros (1356–1366) – and with the Castilian nobility. His increasingly tyrannical rule tended to alienate the lords, who then flocked to the appealing figure of Enrique of Trastámara, Alfonso XI's illegitimate son. The Castilian Civil War (1366–1369) was, ultimately, yet another campaign of the Hundred Years' War, where both contenders found the support of France and England. In the end, Enrique won and he murdered his brother in Montiel in 1369, thereby beginning the Trastámara dynasty in Castile.

The reigns of Enrique II (r. 1369–1379), Juan I (r. 1379–1390) and Enrique III (r. 1390–1406) enabled the Castilian monarchy to restore its authority. This period saw a significant development in the administration and the kingdom's institutions. Royal justice was substantiated through the creation of the *Audiencia* (1371), and the nobility found room in government through the establishment of the *Consejo Real* (Royal Council, 1385). Royal dynastic rights were further guaranteed by conferring heirs apparent the title *Príncipe de Asturias*, thereby ensuring their position both legally and politically. This honorary position was created on account of the Treaty of Bayonne (1388), which saw Juan I betroth the heir, Prince Enrique, to Catherine of Lancaster, daughter of John of Gaunt and granddaughter of Pedro I. This political move

thereby healed the wounds – and potential danger – of having two different branches of the same family with a claim to the throne. The role of the *Cortes* was limited to approving extraordinary levees required by the king, rendering this institution to play a secondary role, unlike other western kingdoms like Navarre, Aragon or, even, England. The second half of the 14th century was a time of peace with the Kingdom of Granada, the last religious frontier in Spain. Nonetheless, conflict was seen with the neighbouring kingdoms of Navarre (1378–1379) and Portugal. In 1383, Juan I claimed the Portuguese throne after marrying to Beatriz, the only surviving child of Fernando I. His designs were, however, severely defeated at the Battle of Aljubarrota in 1385.

The first Trastámara kings mended the wounds caused by the civil war but the political role that the Castilian nobility were to play within the kingdom was still an unresolved matter. This would lead to the conflictive reigns of Juan II (r. 1406– 1454) and Enrique IV (r. 1454–1474). Both these kings established strong relations with trustworthy favourites, called *privados* (Álvaro de Luna under Juan II; Juan Pacheco and Beltrán de la Cueva under Enrique IV). The other nobles perceived the privileges granted to the *privados* as a threat to their power and their ability to access the king, which they saw as their right by virtue of their wealth and status. Indeed, being close to the king at that time, perhaps even controlling him, allowed access to the enormous benefits to be reaped from ever-increasing royal revenues. This instrumentalization of royal authority reached its peak with Enrique IV. The king was accused of an array of sins, including homosexuality, impotence and islamophilia. He was even deposed figuratively in the rebellious performance known as the *Farsa de Ávila* (1465), where an image of him was symbolically deposed and substituted by his brother Alfonso. A growing group of noblemen supported his sister Isabel, who in 1469 had married Fernando, heir to the Aragonese throne. Other members of the nobility, in turn, supported his daughter Juana – her nickname 'la Beltraneja' slurred her with the widespread belief that her real father was the *privado* Beltrán de la Cueva – who was engaged to Afonso V, king of Portugal. Upon Enrique's death, a civil war broke out between both factions, known as the Castilian War of Succession (1474–1479), a conflict which would ultimately be won by Isabel. The victor's marriage with Fernando did not bring the kingdoms together – which would maintain their own laws and institutions – but it did allow the accumulation of an array of kingdoms and lordships in the hands of one person, their future heir. It would ultimately be their grandson who would stand to benefit. Indeed, the future emperor Carlos V would rule a vast empire in the 16th century.

The reign of Isabel (r. 1474–1504) and Fernando (r. 1479–1516) – who have gone down in history as 'the Catholic Kings' – was glorified by contemporary chroniclers, who saw in it a sign of providence. Notwithstanding, there is little

room for doubt regarding the importance of this period for the monarchy. The problems which had plagued predecessors regarding royal authority, government stability and strife between factions of the nobility were the motivation for the creation of both the *Santa Hermandad* (1476) and a reformed *Consejo Real* (1480), which would become much more technical. The nobility, too, would come to benefit from these reforms. Many lordships were granted to major families – e.g. Alba, Medina Sidonia –, reinforcing their power, and also their loyalty. These houses saw themselves put in a position of privilege that they would retain for centuries. At the local level, the Catholic Kings also ensured royal control over cities and urban nobility, thereby concluding a process started by Alfonso XI. They also began a massive territorial expansion. After a long and costly conflict, they conquered Granada in 1492 – thus ending eight centuries of Muslim presence in the Iberian Peninsula. The Canary Islands were also conquered, a convenient stepping stone for the trans-Atlantic voyage to America that Columbus would embark on during the same year.

The year 1492 was also when the Jews were expelled from the Hispanic kingdoms. Social instability and an ongoing crisis had inflamed anti-Semitism. This was the result of a process which had seen the 1391 pogroms, and the assault and massacre of Jewish quarters during the Castilian Civil War. Massive conversions and the implementation of the Inquisition barely held in check the increasing intolerance of Christian society. In 1492, the remaining Jews were forced to convert or be expelled. It is possible that more than 80,000 people were expelled from their Sephardic homeland. This pattern would be repeated with the Muslim population of Granada in 1502, added proof that the nascent Hispanic Monarchy would have no tolerance for dissidence (Manzano 2010: 561–694).

Recruitment system and composition of the armies

Military obligations and recruitment methods

The *Partidas* established that participation in war was compulsory for all inhabitants of the kingdom. This principle of universal mobilization would always be present during the Late Middle Ages, though never actually exercised. The disastrous Battle of Aljubarrota led the *Cortes* of Valladolid in 1385 to push unsuccessfully for a mandatory imposition of military preparedness – steed and arms – for all those who were aged between 20 and

60 years old. In 1495, the Catholic Kings tried once more to establish this requirement, once again to no avail.

During the Late Middle Ages, Castilian armies maintained the heterogeneous nature that had characterized them in the previous centuries. Even as late as the War of Granada, the hosts under the command of the Catholic Kings had troops which clearly reflected their varied origins and military commitments. Those groups that had the obligation to support the king at war – cities, noblemen, other royal vassals – received letters of *apercibimiento*, which warned of the size and nature of the troops expected from each one. Later they would receive a *llamamiento* ('summons'), stating the time and place for the troops to muster. Once the army had been summoned, an *alarde* (roughly, a parade) was carried out in order to assess the size of the host and the adequate compliance of the *apercibimientos*. Despite the existence of these control mechanisms, royal chroniclers often observed with sadness the irregularities of the whole process, which would result in *alardes* of far fewer numbers than previously planned.

Meanwhile, from the mid-14th century onwards, in other kingdoms like Aragon or England, royal armies were mainly composed of hired soldiers. In Castile, nevertheless, feudal obligations continued to coexist with professionals for the duration of the Late Middle Ages, although the proportional presence of hired soldiers would steadily increase. For instance, the king's vassals received an *acostamiento* (salary) in exchange for maintaining arms and steed for war. In the War of Granada, however, this group included only 1,500 knights, testimony to the decreasing importance of this mechanism. The *hidalgos*, whose tax exemptions were privileges conceded by the king, had to provide military service in exchange. This obligation was not merely a norm fossilized in time from times long past. As late as 1485, the *hidalgos* were still summoned to fight by the king's side, albeit they were also paid a salary. In sum, feudal obligations were still an effective mechanism for the king to recruit armed forces, but the proportion of salaried forces would increase to become the backbone of that army.

It is difficult to ascertain the actual recruitment capacity of the monarchy, and hence the actual size of the royal army in the 14th and 15th centuries. For the duration of the Middle Ages, information would be scarce, scattered and, sometimes, untrustworthy. The *Crónica de Alfonso XI* stated that the Castilian army that participated in the Battle of Rio Salado (1340) included 8,000 horsemen and 12,000 foot soldiers, a number that appears exaggerated. In the *Cortes* of 1390, Juan I expected to summon 4,000 *lanzas* ('men-at-arms', which were heavy cavalry), 1,500 *jinetes* (see Glossary) (light cavalry) and 1,000 mounted crossbowmen. In 1409, the regents of Juan II estimated their potential army at 6,000 *lanzas*, 2,000 *jinetes* and 20,000 foot soldiers. Overall, the

recruitment capacity of the monarchy increased during the Late Middle Ages, clearly surpassing the successful campaigns of the 13th century. It would, however, be during the War of Granada that this capacity would see a more dramatic increase: 12,000 cavalry and 40,000 footmen (Ladero Quesada 1993: 242).

Composition of the armies

Personal guard of monarchs

The king's personal guard – the Royal Guard – was the only permanent military contingent of the Castilian army. In 1406, it was organized in three captaincies, each one 100-men strong, but by 1420 they had been increased to 1,000 *lanzas* in total. The Royal Guard was dramatically expanded in 1498, once the *Santa Hermandad* had been dissolved, and would be the core of the future permanent army of the Hispanic Monarchy during the Early Modern Era. In 1504, this group already had 64 captaincies with 1,817 heavy cavalry, 3,266 light cavalry, 146 artillery, 152 *espingarderos* (see Glossary) and 2,797 foot soldiers (Ladero Quesada 1993: 223–224).

Military order troops

In the previous chapter, we analysed how the Templars and Hospitallers had little military capacity due to their scarce territorial implantation in the Iberian kingdoms. They were counted among the members of the royal army, but their importance was quite secondary to those of the Hispanic orders of Santiago, Calatrava and Alcántara during the Late Middle Ages.

Under Alfonso XI the monarchy began to exercise tight control over the Hispanic military orders by naming trusted individuals to the positions of Master. These had been royal creations, and they were thus legitimately in the Crown's service. At times, the king named underage Masters, demonstrating the tight control the monarchy had of them. A good example is that of Alfonso XI, who named his illegitimate son Fadrique as Master of the Order of Santiago. *Infante* Fernando, regent for Juan II, named his two children, Sancho and Enrique, as Masters of the Orders of Alcántara and Santiago. The freedom of these military orders was further reined in during the 15th century. Juan II and Enrique IV even had direct control over the Order's administration for

short spells. The Catholic Kings would culminate this process by becoming lifelong administrators of the orders of Calatrava (1489), Alcántara (1492) and Santiago (1493). Ultimately, Pope Adrian VI would grant perpetual administration to Emperor Carlos V in his bull *Dum intra nostrae* proclaimed in 1523.

The increasing servitude of military orders to the kings steered them off their original purpose: the struggle against Muslims, to become mainstays in any royal campaigns, regardless of the enemy. Thus, they were actively involved in the War of the Two Pedros (1356–1366), in which García Álvarez de Toledo, Master of Santiago, led the Castilian troops after the fall of Calatayud; or Gutierre Gómez de Toledo, Master of Alcántara, who died in 1364 when attempting to supply Murviedro – modern-day Sagunto. The military orders also played an important role in the Battle of Aljubarrota (1385) against Portugal. Their participation was not only limited to foreign conflicts, but also in civil strife. The knights of Santiago and Alcántara participated in the Battle of Nájera (1367) on behalf of Enrique II. Martín López de Córdoba, Master of Calatrava, however, was executed by that king in 1371 after having defended Carmona, the last town loyal to his rival Pedro I. The military orders also suffered profound internal division during the Castilian War of Succession (1474–1479), with different internal factions supporting each contender.

Since 1300, the *encomienda* had become the standard administrative unit that could sustain a specific military unit. Each *encomienda* had to contribute to the order's host with a number of *lanzas* according to its revenues. This well-organized system meant that the contribution of the military orders to the royal army was substantial. In 1487, the Order of Santiago, the most important of the Hispanic orders, provided 1,200 *lanzas* and 2,500 foot soldiers; Calatrava 500 and 1,000, and Alcántara 755 and 400. The foot soldiers only amounted to 8 per cent of the royal army's infantry, but the cavalry would constitute more than one fifth of the total amount the Catholic Kings would have available in their campaigns.

Military orders, as in the 12th and 13th centuries, continued to have great importance because of their numbers and skill in warfare. Their discipline and training led them to participate in some of the most important missions, like surveillance, logistics and strategic support. For similar reasons, the Masters were excellent candidates for the top military command positions. Vasco Rodríguez, Master of Santiago, would be named *Adelantado de la Frontera* in 1328. A century and a half later, Alonso de Cárdenas was the Master of Santiago leading the offensive of the western front in the War of Granada. This leading role, naturally, would also prove perilous and many Masters and knights would die during campaigns. A couple of examples are provided by

Nuño Chamizo, Master of Alcántara, who died during the siege of Algeciras (1343) or Rodrigo Téllez de Girón, Master of Calatrava, who died while besieging Loja (1482) after being fatally wounded by two arrows (Ayala 2003: 550–720).

Noble militias

The *Ordenamiento de Burgos* (1338), proclaimed by Alfonso XI, provided the first detailed information regarding the contribution to the royal army that all noblemen – who received a salary from the king, *libramiento* (see Glossary) – had to provide when summoned. Beneficiaries had to destine a third of that salary to their own equipment and horses, and the other two-thirds to equipping their own retinue. Each 1,100 *maravedíes* meant one man at arms, accompanied by one spearman and one crossbowman. Military service lasted three months, after which the king would pay for the extra salary. Both the salaries paid and the size of the host that beneficiaries had to contribute to the royal army were updated at each meeting of the *Cortes* in the ensuing decades. In the second half of the 14th century the term *lanza* appeared, henceforth becoming the basic unit for measuring the size and power of a Castilian army. Its exact meaning is unknown, though it is inferred that it is the equivalent of a 'man-at-arms', with an additional horse, supported by two or three foot soldiers.

The system regulated by Alfonso XI was inherently feudal in that all beneficiaries of the *libramiento* were the king's vassals. In addition, the nobility that came from the *Frontera* – those lands most recently conquered, which were bordering the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada – had benefited from the lordships granted by the king, so their military obligations involved no added salary. Throughout the 14th and 15th centuries the nobility continued to receive monetary compensation for military service. This feudal rent, in which the fee was just money, began to be known as *acostamiento* starting in the late 14th century. The *acostamiento* benefited the most powerful noble families, and their great armed retinues, as well as the urban vassals, who maintained a horse and arms for the king. Initially, the nobility owed three months of service for the salary already received, but by the end of the 15th century the monarchy was paying wages from day one.

These hosts were manned by the magnate's own vassals – who in turn also received their *acostamiento* –, members of the noble household itself, and people living in their lands. In the Late Medieval period the nobility's hosts continued to form the backbone of the royal army, together with urban

militias. In the 1487 campaign noblemen contributed 6,727 horsemen, 1,201 crossbowmen and 4,052 spearmen to the royal army (Ladero Quesada 1993: 211).

All major campaigns counted on the direct involvement of the nobility from the whole kingdom, but it was always Andalusian noblemen who were most active, and from whom more was expected. Some families like the Ponce de León or the Guzmán were always participating in the wars against Granada in the 14th and 15th centuries. Similarly, ecclesiastical lords contributed their share. Their contingents were at times even larger than those of the great magnates, as is the case of the Archbishop of Toledo, who contributed 1,000 horsemen and an equal number of footmen to the War of Granada.

Urban militias

Council militias were also a basic pillar of the royal army in the High Middle Ages, whose importance would only grow in the later centuries. From a quantitative point of view, troops obtained from *realengo* towns – directly dependent on the king – were the largest proportion of the army that the Catholic Kings used to conquer Granada.

Again, it was under the reign of Alfonso XI that changes were imposed on the military obligations of Castilian towns. The king reformed the *caballería popular*, a significant part of council armies. Rather than continuing to be voluntary, it was made compulsory, for all those who had rents above a specific level, to maintain a steed and arms for military service. Apart from tributary exemptions, all knights had certain social privileges, specially pertaining to clothing, as a compensation for their service. This system had marked regional differences regarding what rent level made someone qualify. Murcia and Andalusia were the regions where the minimum rent was lowest, implying a greater weight of the council hosts from these southerly regions – much closer to the action against Granada. This also reflected how royal authority found fewer constraints in the most recently conquered parts of the kingdom.

Despite the continuity of feudal commitments such as the *caballería popular*, town militias were paid for their service. By the end of the 15th century, the recruitment system had been greatly developed. The *Santa Hermandad* collected funds to hire these urban troops, pack animals and all other personnel required for the royal army. Again, it can be noted how there was a clear tendency to create an army solely based on waged troops.

Information on the composition of council militias is rare until the end of

the 15th century, but there is little room for doubting its importance. The *Santa Hermandad* contributed 2,500 men-at-arms and 10,000 foot soldiers every year after 1485. Normally, neighbouring town militias were raised when campaigns were small. However, greater campaigns tended to include militias from the whole kingdom. In both cases, Andalusian cities, given their size and location, were always main providers of troops. According to the *alarde* of 1405, Seville and its *alfoz* (hinterland) could muster 1,355 horsemen, 1,577 crossbowmen and 4,881 spearmen (Ladero Quesada 1993: 218; González 2016: 47–48).

Castle garrisons and tenancies

Maintaining castles and fortresses to defend the border with Granada was a complicated and expensive endeavour for the monarchy. In order to attract settlers that could guarantee the defence of those positions, Castilian kings granted these places abundant privileges, among which we can highlight the privilege of *homicianos*. In 1310, Fernando IV guaranteed full pardon – except for crimes of treason or *alevosía* (a form of betrayal of other people, not the king) – to whomever remained in Gibraltar for one year and one day. This privilege was extended by Alfonso XI to other places like Teba, Tarifa, Alcalá la Real and Algeciras, and this was applied throughout the 15th century. Antequera, Jimena, Archidona, Alhama and Santa Fé also received similar privileges, revealing the difficulty the monarchy had in populating these areas, even within a broader context of demographic growth and complete absence of any threat of future invasions from North Africa.

Throughout the 14th century, the number of soldiers that the Crown estimated necessary to defend those positions is known, although there are no chancery records to prove that these numbers were met until the end of the 15th century. Under the Catholic Kings the monarchy supported approximately 70 castles in the Granadan borderland, the rest being managed by noblemen or town councils. Garrison sizes varied according to the strategic importance of the place. Important castles like Antequera required 120 light cavalry, 300 crossbowmen and 200 spearmen. A small fortress like Olvera would have around 100 men: 20 light cavalry, 24 crossbowmen and 66 spearmen (Ladero Quesada 1993: 202–203).

Chain of command

The reign of Juan I saw many institutional changes that modified royal

administration, and many of them altered military organization. The newly created *Consejo Real* would play an important role for the army, such as preparing the written summons for war. The main development, however, was the creation of the *Condestable* (Constable) in 1382, which would come to concentrate the leadership of the Castilian army. This rendered the position of *Alférez Mayor* pointless, and henceforth the *Alférez* would become a symbolic role within the army, the royal standard-bearer in ceremonies. The reforms carried out by Juan I imitated the model imposed by the Valois dynasty in France. Just as in France, below the *Condestable* would be the marshals, who were in charge of the *aposentamiento* (troop accommodation).

The defence of the Granadan frontier remained in the hands of the two *Adelantados* (see Glossary) – one of Frontera the other of Murcia –, though their power would progressively diminish after the mid-14th century. In the 15th century, the border was divided into military sectors, each with a *Capitán Mayor* in charge. In addition, the *fronteros mayores* or *frontaleros* also defended specific places. The final quarter of the 15th century, in particular during the War of Granada, saw the emergence of the *Capitán General*, a nobleman who had full military power in a given territory.

Troops were organized in captaincies. The king's vassals, small noble retinues or local militias were integrated within major captaincies, under the command of a *Capitán Mayor* appointed by the king. Light infantry was organized into *cuadrillas* (a 50-soldier platoon), led by captains or *cuadrilleros*. The *adalides* continued to provide valuable assessment based on their military experience and knowledge of the terrain.

Military operations

Attrition warfare

During the 14th and 15th centuries warfare did not change much with respect to the High Middle Ages. Juan Manuel (1282–1348), a powerful nobleman and prolific author, mentioned in his *Libro de los Estados* the four types of campaign carried out in Muslim territory. Christians could carry out a *cabalgada* (see Glossary) – *chevauchée* – to steal cattle and take prisoners, much in the manner of the *almogavers* – troops that were well known for this type of activity. These raids (*cabalgadas*) could also be used to destroy crops and thus harass local sustenance. Additionally, other campaigns would seek to siege a stronghold or to engage in a pitched battle.

Cabalgadas continued to be the predominant military operation in the Granadan frontier for the duration of the period. Nonetheless, as Juan Manuel also pointed out, it is important to differentiate between raids for pillage, and those that formed part of a larger strategy, wearing down the economic, material, political and moral structures of the enemy before occupying the territory. Neighbouring Christian kingdoms also suffered these raids, as happened in Portugal during the 1336–1338 war. Notwithstanding, it was the Muslim kingdom of Granada that constituted the most legitimate objective, and the prey of Castilian expansive ambition.

In the *Frontera*, *chevauchées* were the predominant form of cross-border harassing, often also taking place during truces. Alfonso de Palencia (1423–1492) wrote a famous text which mentioned an old unwritten law between Muslims and Christians which allowed storming a fortress or any town by surprise, as long as it did not take more than three days. To be legitimate, these actions had to be improvised, without bearing any banner, and their occurrence was not grounds for breaking an established truce. This rendered the *Frontera* a place where violence was intermittent but always possible. Raids into enemy territory to obtain cattle or prisoners went hand in hand with these sudden assaults. This region was constantly shuffled back and forth, with many castles repeatedly changing hands.

These operations were carried out mainly by noblemen and town councils from the *Frontera* itself. However, their strategic value, and other added benefits, also drove the monarchy to lead *cabalgadas*. For instance, these *chevauchées* were much cheaper than sieges, which allowed the Crown to keep the pressure on Granada up in periods of economic hardship. Furthermore, the potential loot, together with the short duration, made these operations appealing for the nobility. The *Crónica de Fernando IV* illustrates this in an anecdote from 1309. The kingdom's nobility led large retinues to the royal summon because they believed they were going to start a *cabalgada* in the Vega de Granada – fertile plains around the city of Granada. The chronicler reflected the discontent among these noblemen, who would have brought fewer men if they had known the real plan: a siege of Algeciras. When *cabalgadas* were led by the king, their scale and ambition were much greater. Often the encirclement of certain castles was combined with the destruction of crops. During the reign of Alfonso XI these kinds of campaigns were carried out quite often. The *chevauchées* of 1317, 1326, 1330 and 1341 also resulted in the taking of frontier fortresses.

Nonetheless, the second half of the 14th century saw the *cabalgadas* become predominantly an activity carried out by councils and noblemen from the *Frontera*, though the monarchy never entirely discarded them given their strategic value. According to Chancellor Ayala (1332–1407), in 1379 Enrique II

contemplated the possibility of conquering Granada through a war of attrition. The Castilian navy would blockade the Strait of Gibraltar in order to cut off overseas supplies to the Nasrid kingdom. On land, the army would split into three hosts, which would alternate four-month-long overland attacks. These campaigns would not approach fortified positions, wasting no time to decimate the agricultural capacity of Granada which, after two or three years, would be starved to surrender. Similarly, at the start of Enrique IV's reign, it was believed that continuous attacks on the Granadan border would bring the Nasrids down. Even speculating whether the monarchy could have financed and manned such sustained military operations, bringing Granada down solely through attrition always appeared far-fetched. Conquering that territory necessarily meant taking the towns and fortresses, which required long and complicated siege operations.

Siege warfare

In the latter half of the 14th century, Castile laid siege to great Iberian cities like Lisbon and Valencia. It was, however, in the Muslim campaigns when siege tactics proved more important. A war that involved territorial conquest necessarily entailed the capture of the main cities and fortified places. This is precisely the sort of conflict Castile was engaged in during the Late Middle Ages until the conquest of Granada in 1492.

Sieges were, indeed, of primary importance during two phases of Castilian expansion: the reign of Alfonso XI and the War of Granada. In the early 14th century the Battle of the Strait – the ongoing conflict over the control of the Strait of Gibraltar, fought between Castile, Granada and the Marinid Sultanate from north-western Africa – saw the positions of Tarifa, Gibraltar and Algeciras as the prime objective. Alfonso XI was able to lift the siege of Tarifa in 1340, conquer Algeciras in 1344 and he attempted to take Gibraltar in 1350, dying of plague during that campaign. Controlling these three towns was very important because, from the Castilian point of view, it prevented further African invasions, denying Granada any potential help. Alfonso XI also saw the conquest of several fortifications near the border. Most of these were on the western end, near the Ronda massif, a key position for the defence of Granada. The most celebrated conquest, nonetheless, was that of Alcalá la Real (1341), which lay a mere 40 miles from Granada itself.

Diego de Valera (1412–1488) was a courtesan and a prolific writer who believed that the key to bringing Granada down was conquering Malaga. Valera considered that the best strategy was to pursue the course of

cabalgadas, heading towards the main coastal city of the Kingdom of Granada. Reality, however, would be stubbornly difficult. The failed siege of Loja proved that only gradual advance could guarantee success, especially when attempting to siege an important fortified town. The War of Granada, therefore, was a long succession of sieges. In the first years, the Catholic Kings focused on the western end of the kingdom. The conquests of Alora, Loja (1486) and, above all, Ronda itself (1485) opened the possibility of beleaguering Malaga (1487). Once the coastal city was taken, the Castilian army focused on Baza, whose long siege and ultimate fall in 1489 would, however, mean the conquest of the entire eastern end of the kingdom, including the immediate surrenders of Guadix and Almería. The final event of that war was the siege of Granada itself, which ultimately ended with the fall of the last Muslim stronghold on 2 January 1492.

The operations of both Alfonso XI and the Catholic Kings mentioned above were focused mainly on siege warfare and large cities, but the differences were enormous. The logistical and economic effort going into these sieges was outstanding both in the 14th and 15th centuries. The development of gunpowder, however, would change their duration.

The siege of Algeciras pushed the Castilian monarchy to its limit. Alfonso XI was forced to request several loans in order to finance the 20-month siege. Apart from the economic cost, the logistic structures set in place were also great. The non-fighting people involved sappers, carpenters, stonemasons, etc., who were fundamental in setting up the land blockade of the city and providing the troops with accommodation and defence. Algeciras enjoyed exceptional defences which withstood the constant trebuchet fire – as well as from other siege machinery – and minor assaults. Once naval superiority was achieved, the city was also blockaded from the sea. Merely two weeks after cutting off the last supply line, the besieged city sued for peace and surrendered.

The conquest of Antequera (1410) was the first siege to see the use of gunpowder in full, but it would not be until the War of Granada that the Castilian army would use artillery systematically. Indeed, the massive use of cannons would dramatically change what sieges were like. In 1484, Alora and Setenil fell after just a few days under siege, and the next year Ronda followed the same fate. Ronda had been considered an unassailable city by chroniclers: it was a mountainous landscape and its *alcazar* – fortress – was surrounded by three walls. However, the new Castilian artillery made short work of them and after ten days of bombardment the city would surrender. Some 50 nearby towns, fearing a similar ordeal, also sued for peace (O'Callaghan 2014: 143–149).

Gunpowder affected siege warfare because cannons radically shortened the

duration of these operations. This, however, would not be the only key difference between the War of Granada and the campaigns of Alfonso XI in the 14th century. The fiscal capacity of the monarchy was also much greater under the Catholic Kings, which meant money could be collected and allocated swiftly. The sieges of Malaga and Baza were complex military operations, but they only lasted a few months, while Alfonso XI had needed almost two years for Algeciras alone and he had to wait five years to start a similar venture – the siege of Gibraltar. Sieges of such importance were no longer exceptional enterprises at the end of the 15th century. The Catholic Kings had the capacity to muster enough men and cannons for sieges almost on an annual basis, proving to what extent the royal war effort had become a well-greased machine.

FIGURE 3.17 Use of gunpowder. War of Granada. (Wikimedia Commons. © José Luiz Bernardes Ribeiro)

Pitched battles

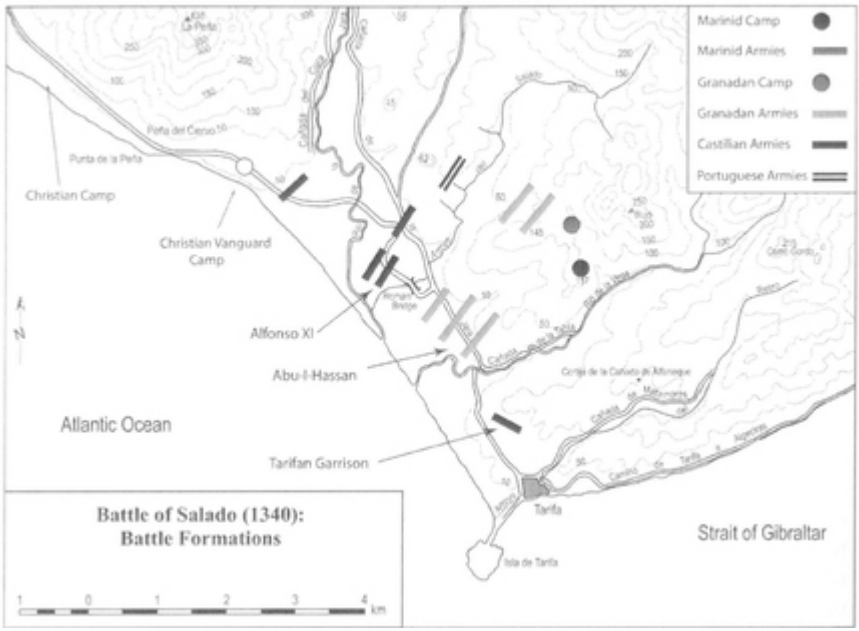
During the 14th and 15th centuries pitched battles between big armies with thousands of combatants were rare. In 200 years only five of these involved Castile: Rio Salado (1340), Nájera (1367), Aljubarrota (1385), Higueruela (1431) and Toro (1476). In addition, some ten lesser engagements can be added to that list. The detailed analysis of two of the larger battles, Rio Salado and Nájera, can help to better understand their nature, Castilian army tactics, and

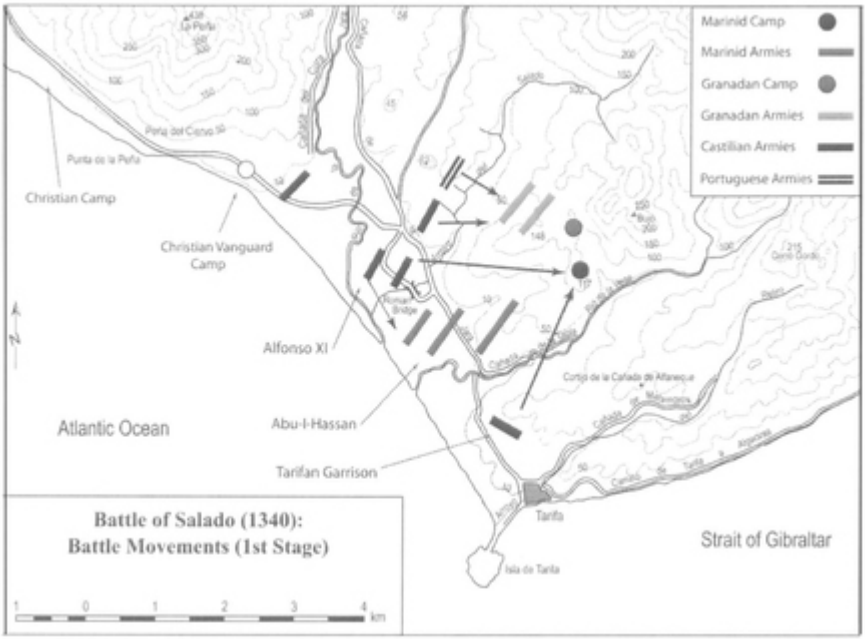
contribute to the debate on the role of pitched battles in medieval strategy.

On 30 October 1340, Alfonso XI inflicted a resounding defeat on the Marinid Sultan Abu al-Hasan in the Battle of Rio Salado. Any attempt to reconstruct this battle relies heavily on chronicles, which forgoes any possibility of objective numbers. An added problem was the habit these sources had of dressing the accounts with literary *topoi* which adorned, or substituted, actual events. For example, the *Crónica de Alfonso XI* had the Archbishop of Toledo, Gil Álvarez de Albornoz, holding the reins of the Castilian king, in the fray of battle, so he would not fling himself into combat. This event is identical to the mid-13th century *De Rebus Hispaniae* chronicle, where the then archbishop, Jiménez de Rada, held King Alfonso VIII's reins in the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212). These similarities reveal the existence of a literary *topos* used by medieval chroniclers to adorn their accounts.

The *Crónica de Alfonso XI*, as mentioned above, numbered the Castilian army at 8,000 horsemen and 12,000 infantry, a number far superior to what the monarchy could muster at that time. On the other hand, the Muslim army was unrealistically large, with hundreds of thousands of men. Other accounts reduce this exaggeration to fifty or sixty thousand soldiers, doubtlessly also overblown. It can be inferred, nonetheless, that the Castilian army was numerically inferior. Alfonso XI arrayed his army in two cavalry units, one in the front led by some of the most important nobles – such as Juan Manuel or Juan Núñez de Lara – and another one behind and centre, where the king himself stood. The infantry was set out behind, acting as an auxiliary unit. The Castilian army stood opposite to the Marinid army, and to the left of the king was the Portuguese army, with the support of some Castilian units, challenging the forces from Granada. Meanwhile, on the eve of the battle, a contingent of troops was able to slip through the Muslim encirclement of Tarifa in the night. This unit would play an important role in the battle the next day.

The Castilian army struggled to cross the Salado River, where the Marinid troops awaited. Once the cavalry managed to do this, the real hand-to-hand fighting started. After the first clashes, a gap opened up in the Muslim lines which allowed the Castilian vanguard to ride towards the Marinid encampment. This movement exposed Alfonso XI's unit to the Sultan's main body, but his troops steadfastly withstood the assault. In the meantime, the Castilian unit that had sneaked into Tarifa the previous night sortied from the beleaguered city and attacked the Marinid camp together with the Castilian vanguard. Once they ransacked it, these forces returned to the main battlefield to attack the Marinids from the rear. In an attempt to avoid being outflanked, Abu


Marinid Camp
Marinid Armies
Granadan Camp
Granadan Armies
Castilian Armies
Portuguese Armies
Punta de la Peña
Christian Camp
Christian Vanguard Camp
Alfonso XI
Abu-l-Hassan
Atlantic Ocean
Tarifan Garrison
Tarifa
Strait of Gibraltar
Isla de Tarifa
Battle of Salado (1340):
Battle Formations
1 0 1 2 3 4 km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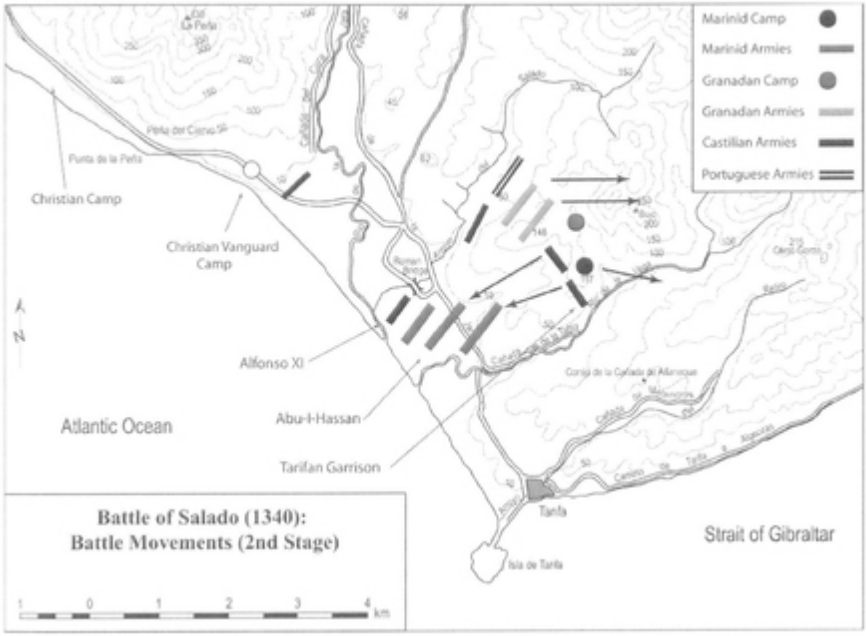
Portuguese Armies
Punta de la Peña
Christian Camp
Christian Vanguard Camp
Alfonso XI
Abu-l-Hassan
Atlantic Ocean
Tarifan Garrison
Tarifa
Strait of Gibraltar
Isla de Tarifa
Battle of Salado (1340):
Battle Movements (1st Stage)
1 0 1 2 3 4 km


Marinid Camp
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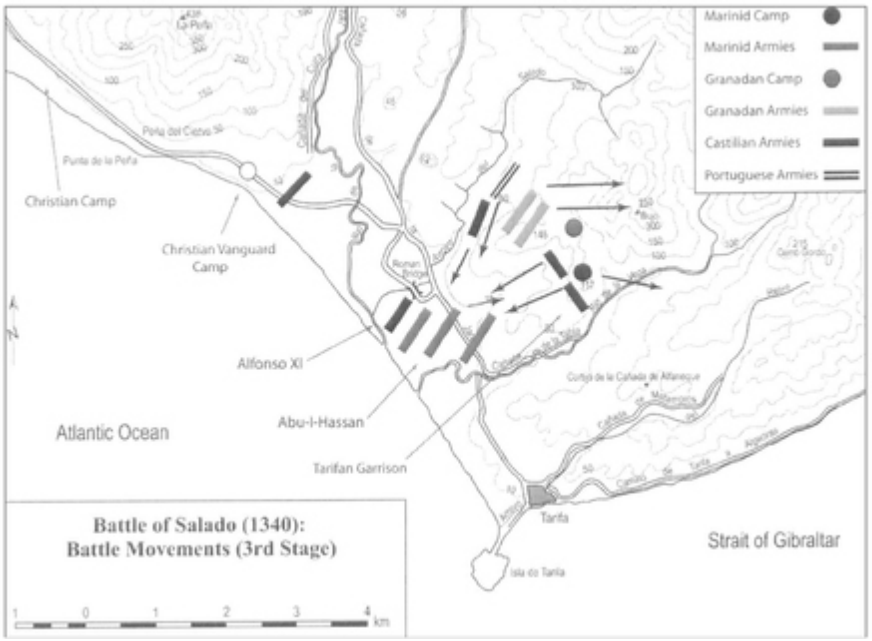
Castilian Armies
Portuguese Armies
Punta de la Peña
Christian Camp
Christian Vanguard Camp
Alfonso XI
Abu-l-Hassan
Tarifan Garrison
Atlantic Ocean
Tarifa
Isla de Tarifa
Strait of Gibraltar
Battle of Salado (1340):
Battle Movements (2nd Stage)
1 0 1 2 3 4 km


Marinid Camp
Marinid Armies
Granadan Camp
Granadan Armies
Castilian Armies
Portuguese Armies
Punta de la Peña
Christian Camp
Christian Vanguard Camp
Alfonso XI
Abu-l-Hassan
Tarifan Garrison
Atlantic Ocean
Tarifa
Isla de Tarifa
Strait of Gibraltar
Battle of Salado (1340):
Battle Movements (3rd Stage)
1 0 1 2 3 4 km

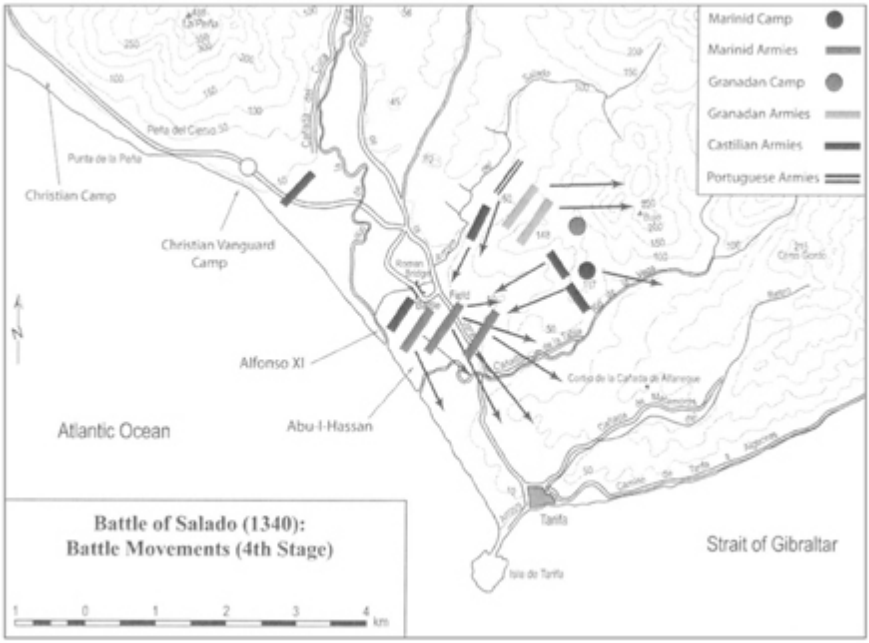


FIGURE 3.18.1 TO 3.18.5 Battle of Salado (1340). (According to Nicolás Agrait, 'The Battle of Salado (1340) Revisited', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, X, The Boydell Press, 2012.)

al-Hasan tried to swing his army around, to no avail. The Marinid army could not withstand the pressure and fled. The *Crónica de Alfonso XI* considered that the contingent that sortied from Tarifa provided a definitive turning point. This opinion was shared by Muslim writers like Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406). Abu Hammu II (king of Tlemcen, which broke away from the Marinid Sultanate soon after the battle, 1359–1389) would write the book *Wāsiṭat al-sulūk fī siyāsat al-mulūk* (*El collar de perlas* is the title of the Spanish translation), in which the defeat was blamed on the confusion caused by Abu al-Hasan's manoeuvre.

Once again chronicles are the main source of information regarding the Battle of Nájera, in particular the work of Chandos Herald and chancellor Ayala, both of whom witnessed the engagement from different sides. As usual, the numbers vary enormously, but there is a general agreement that it was an even-sided battle, which prompted the English to be more offensive than usual. The Castilian army was formed in three parts. In the main body were the elite units, including the French mercenaries and several Castilian noblemen – who decided to fight on foot at the orders of the mercenary commander Bertrand du Guesclin. Behind them was the cavalry commanded by Enrique II himself. In each flank there were other cavalry units as well as infantry armed with javelins and slings. The crossbowmen lent support to the main body, while the rest of the infantry remained in the rearguard. Enrique II decided to have the

troops cross the Najerilla River so they could engage the English on the plain – which Ayala would consider the king's folly since he forsook the defensive advantage of the fording for the sake of courage and chivalrousness. Once the battle began, English longbowmen made all the difference in the flanks, repelling the Castilian cavalry and forcing them to flee. Thus, the central unit was eventually surrounded and defeated. Enrique II finally escaped, but Du Guesclin and a great number of noblemen were captured in the defeat (Agrait 2012; Arias 2012: 149–157; Villalon 2005).

From a tactical point of view, the Castilian cavalry, which combined horsemen *a la guisa* (men-at-arms) and *jinetes* (light cavalry), played a key role in all the battles. It was the main combat unit, leaving infantry with an auxiliary role. The decision by Du Guesclin to fight on foot with the men-at-arms in Nájera was truly exceptional. His decision was motivated by the enemy he was facing and the French experience in Crecy (1346) and Poitiers (1356). This remained an exception and, for the remainder of the Middle Ages, the Castilian army, when fighting the traditional enemy of Granada, would always use the cavalry charge as the predominant tactic.

Both battles induce different conclusions as to the role pitched battles played in medieval strategy. The Battle of Rio Salado followed the classic Vegetian paradigm. It was a conflict resulting from a siege, and Alfonso XI could only save the city of Tarifa by forcing a pitched battle. The Battle of Nájera, however, was sought by both sides in order to resolve a civil conflict. There is little doubt that the events of the previous year forced the hand of Enrique II. Then, when the Trastámara contender entered Castile leading an army, Pedro I had refused to engage, fleeing to the south. This decision led the nobility and cities en masse to defect to Enrique's side. Enrique, therefore, fearing the opposite could happen, did all he could to seek battle against the invading army that came in support of Pedro I.

When fighting against the Muslims, pitched battles were normally the consequence of sieges – e.g. the Battle of Rio Salado. Similarly, the battles of Palmones (1343) and Boca del Asno (1410) were won by the Castilians during the sieges of Algeciras and Antequera. The Battle of Higueruela (1431), however, was fought at the gates of Granada itself, an exception that was due to its more political, and not strategic, nature. Álvaro de Luna, *Condestable* and the king's *privado*, organized a campaign to increase his prestige at the expense of the Muslims, and thus legitimize his prominent position within the kingdom. Civil conflicts, on the other hand, encouraged battles in order to find a resolution. Subjugating an enemy through a long series of sieges was impractical. Moreover, the speedy resolution offered by a battle impeded the pernicious effect of defections. The abundant internal conflicts which assailed Castile during the Late Middle Ages prompted numerous engagements, such as

the two battles of Olmedo (1445 and 1467). Similarly, pitched battles were a key feature of the Castilian Civil War (Nájera) and the Castilian War of Succession (Toro, 1476).

The Battle of Aljubarrota (1385), analysed by João Gouveia Monteiro in the chapter dedicated to Portugal, is an exceptional case because of the political crisis caused by that resounding Castilian defeat. Usually, the political and military consequences derived from pitched battles were limited, even in the case of civil wars. Notwithstanding, these battles were very important in the representation and legitimation of royal authority. Kings used them for propagandistic purposes and they were a key element in the creation of royal memory, described below in further detail.

Logistics, supplies and funding

The disappearance of the royal chancery records severely hinders any analysis of funding, maintenance and logistics of Castilian armies until the end of the 15th century. The information that is still available, nonetheless, provides excellent proof of the enormous development of the royal taxation during the Late Middle Ages, which allowed it to fund, supply and mobilize increasingly larger armies for campaigns which were progressively more ambitious, and expensive.

Grand conquest campaigns were an outstanding logistical challenge for the monarchy. Following the troops, there was a very large number of people whose functions were vital for the war effort. The siege of Malaga (1487), for example, needed 4,000 labourers and 1,100 carts to open roads. Additionally, more than 180 stonecutters and 110 carpenters made projectiles and prepared artillery weapons. The army also needed to be fed and supplied, as well as paid. Fernando del Pulgar describes the problems incurred during the siege of Baza (1489). The absence of rivers, distance to the sea and mountainous nature of the land made supplying very difficult. In addition, no merchants dared bring their business to the siege, which forced Queen Isabel to buy provisions herself and rent 14,000 pack animals to transport them. The economic burden did not end once campaigns concluded, because border fortresses also had to be supplied permanently, as well as recently conquered land. The towns of Andalusia and Murcia were the main suppliers of food during and after the campaigns.

The combination of ordinary royal income and the *servicios* granted by the *Cortes* were insufficient funding for the colossal expenses incurred by a military campaign, compelling the monarchy to establish new tributes

designed specifically to bankroll them. In 1333, the *alcabala* (see Glossary) was created, a tax on economic transactions which was first implemented in Andalusia and Murcia, and nine years later extended to the whole kingdom. This tribute was originally temporarily dedicated to the military demands of King Alfonso XI, but it became a permanent mainstay and one of the Crown's most important sources of revenue.

Ecclesiastical funds became another pillar of the war effort against Islam. The concession of the bulls of the Crusade provided the monarchy with massive economic benefits in the form of *tercias reales*, the *Décima*, and money obtained through the sale of indulgences. These ecclesiastical revenues were often appropriated by the Castilian kings without any official request put forth to the papacy. This abusive situation was often rife with tension, and the Church often defended its revenue by resorting to the excommunication of kings. The revenues derived from the bulls of the Crusade constituted a significant portion of the funds destined for the war effort. During the War of Granada (1482–1492), this contribution amounted to 650 million *maravedíes* from indulgences alone. These were cash donations paid by people who were not going to participate in the military campaigns and yet desired the associated spiritual benefits. The *Décima* was conceded in 1482, 1485, 1487, 1489, 1491 and 1492, amounting to 100,000 florins (160 million *maravedíes*) approximately, every time it was levied. Despite this generous contribution by the Church, the war effort at times pushed the royal treasury to its limit. For this reason, the value of the currency was occasionally lowered, loans were requested and some royal landholdings were sold. These economic straits would come in times of a sustained and ambitious war effort, such as under the rule of Alfonso XI and the Catholic Kings. During the siege of Algeciras, Alfonso XI even pawned the royal jewellery as guarantee for a loan from Philippe VI of France. The Castilian king also borrowed from his father-in-law, Afonso IV of Portugal, giving some borderline castles as guarantee. Moreover, the Catholic Kings owed 300 million *maravedíes* to towns and wealthy individuals – some of them were compelled to loan at no interest. As mentioned before, sometimes the monarchy resorted to selling parts of the royal demesne to pay back the loans. It was in this way that Alfonso de Aguilar bought the lordship of Montefrío and that the Marquis of Cádiz obtained Casares. On the one hand, the cost of war motivated the development and expansion of royal taxation, but it also resulted in ever-larger debts, a situation which would only worsen dramatically in the Early Modern Period (Ladero Quesada 1993: 700–707).

Armament

Castilian weaponry in the Late Middle Ages was standard for the time. Perhaps the most distinctive unit was the light cavalry – known as riders *a la jineta* –, an import from Muslim warfare, which was exclusive to Castile. These *jinetes* wore light armour – unlike riders *a la guisa*, who were heavily armoured – and a light spear which could be used in close combat, or thrown. Nonetheless, the heavy cavalry continued to be the backbone of Castilian armies. The size of their lances increased with time, prompting a change in the shields they bore. They became rectangular and developed notches for setting the lance which increased their charge-impact, allowing for progressively heavier lances. The heavier armours developed in the late 14th and 15th centuries made slashing combat inefficient, therefore the sword blades tended to narrow, adapting to a new role as thrusting weapons. A different response would be provided by two weapons which also became common: the halberd, and the two-handed sword, the weight of which was capable of cutting through heavy armour. Crossbows were important weapons for the Castilian infantry; in 1338 and 1348 rules were issued to promote their use among the infantry. The infantry, however, also included troops armed with slings or javelins, in particular in the 14th century, when they were present in the Battle of Nájera (1367). According to Froissart, Castilians were renowned for their skilled use of the javelin (*dardo*).

Protective armament did undergo various developments in the final two centuries of the Middle Ages. Castilian armours have traditionally been considered lighter than their English or French counterparts, a difference that would only be overcome in the 15th century. Documentary and iconographic sources, however, reveal the use of plated mail from very early on. The *Ordenamiento de Burgos* of 1338 already mentioned plates (*fojas*) which reinforced the chain mail or hauberk. Together with these first *fojas*, the 14th century also saw new protective pieces for limbs, such as greaves, arm guards – rerebrace, vambrace, couter – and gauntlets. The presence of Du Guesclin's White Companies, which were heavily armoured, led to the expansion of this type of equipment. Nonetheless, it was already attested in the early 14th century. Indeed, the gorget – which protected the collarbone – appears early on in Castilian iconography, prompting the hypothesis that it was developed in Spain. During the 15th century armours incorporated the breastplate and backplate – together forming the cuirass – and hence full plated armour. Helmets also tended to become increasingly more pointed and with rounded edges, to improve impact resistance. In Castile, the bassinet became the predominant helmet type after 1350.

Gunpowder would revolutionize armament during the Late Middle Ages beyond recognition. The first indisputable mention of gunpowder in the Iberian Peninsula is made during the Castilian siege of Algeciras (1342–1344). The chronicle of Alfonso XI mentions the weapons used by the beleaguered Marinids, which fired iron balls. The writer describes the terror these arms inflicted on the Castilian troops, for these projectiles could go through a fully armoured warrior, causing wounds which were impossible to cure. Despite this impression, it would not be until the late 15th century that Castilian arsenals took artillery seriously. In 1407, *Infante* Fernando could only count on four bombards. Eight decades later, the royal army had 200 cannons – including bombards and ribauldequins – at its disposal for the siege of Malaga. In 1479 the monarchy only had four artillerymen on its payroll, but six years later there were already 91. The use of firearms expanded rapidly among the infantry. The *espingarda* was a flintlock rifle mounted on a stock similar to that of a crossbow, which became a common Castilian weapon. By the end of the War of Granada, the Castilian army had several hundred *espingarderos*. Some towns, like Toledo or Ciudad Real, had specialized so much in these units that they only supplied troops of that type. This rapid implementation of firearms would be a veritable revolution for Castilian armies and warfare (Ladero Quesada 1993: 683–689; Soler 1991).

Fortifications

During the Late Middle Ages Castile continued to honour its name. A stunning display of castles dotted the landscape, often concentrated in frontier areas with other kingdoms. These borders, at least those with the Christian kingdoms of Navarre, Aragon and Portugal, remained mostly unaltered for two centuries. They materialized through the conspicuously evident parallel alignments of castles and fortresses. Such was the importance of these castles that they were frequently included in marriage agreements between Christian kingdoms, as was the case with the frequent intermarrying of the Castilian and Portuguese crowns starting in the second half of the 13th century, which tended to contain clauses regarding these positions. In the case of the border with the Kingdom of Granada, the defensive structure created under Alfonso XI remained in place until the War of Granada. This structure included three lines: the supporting towns which organized the defence, a line of citadels and castles, and finally a vanguard line of fortlets and towers. Maintaining this structure was very expensive for the royal treasury. For that reason, they were often granted to noblemen or cities for oversight and, despite this, some –

especially the lesser ones – were often in a dire state of disrepair. Royal diplomas and the *Cortes* proceedings reveal a permanent preoccupation with their condition, and the urgency of collecting money for their upkeep.

Castilian castles changed little from the High Middle Ages until the late 15th century, except for the multiplication of pentagonal towers and the appearance of barriers to protect the walls. It was, however, the spread of artillery that truly brought a change in fortifications. As mentioned above, artillery changed the nature and duration of siege warfare; during the War of Granada many beleaguered objectives surrendered after a few days of bombardment. Castilian fortresses were also unprepared for firearms, except for the castle of La Mota in Medina del Campo. That castle was built under the Catholic kings (1477–1483), and its fortification architecture was designed to withstand cannon fire. Several elements made it more resistant to artillery. These included a concealment of the wall through partial interment and barriers, warding off direct impacts. Also, apart from embrasures for defensive cannon fire, it included a large moat and caponier, which allowed countermining. Finally, it had ramparts, platforms and roundels surrounding gates and towers. La Mota, and other contemporary castles such as Coca (1473–1496), would be the model for the fortress of Salsas, north of Perpignan, which was able to withstand the siege of the powerful French artillery in 1503. This was merely a first step towards a type of fortress that could resist heavy artillery fire, which would become common in the Early Modern Period (Cobos 2004).

Naval warfare

FIGURE 3.19 La Mota Castle (Medina del Campo). (© Fernando Arias Guillén)

The Castilian monarchy underwent large investments to improve *El Arenal* in Seville, and create royal shipyards in Castro Urdiales. Nonetheless, it remained unable to equip a fleet large enough for its military needs without assistance. The main ports on the Cantabrian coast were compelled to provide ships to the royal navy in exchange for tributary exemptions. In spite of this, the fleet remained too small for the monarchy's designs, prompting it to requisition private vessels or request other more seafaring realms for ships, in exchange for diplomatic or economic privileges. Therefore, the Castilian navy always included Genoese, Portuguese and Aragonese ships. A greater tax collection capacity and the invention of new tributes, like the salt tax (1338), were insufficient to finance naval operations, let alone maintain a standing fleet. The need to request loans was permanent, such were the financial difficulties faced by Alfonso XI during the endless siege of Algeciras.

The 14th century saw the creation of the Admiral as the main commander of naval affairs. The Genoese sailors Egidio and Ambrosio Bocanegra would occupy that position during the reigns of Alfonso XI, Pedro I and Enrique II, bearing witness to the importance of the Genoese fleet for the Castilian navy. Starting in the 15th century, this position would become merely ceremonial in the Court, permanently occupied by the Enríquez family.

The campaigns of Pero Niño (c.1378–1453), *El Victorial*, reveal the two main campaign theatres of the Castilian navy, namely the Strait of Gibraltar and Atlantic Europe. The fleet played a key role in the Battle of the Strait, performing in battles, intelligence and naval blockades. In the 15th century, when naval superiority had been secured, priorities shifted to piracy and privateering, though naval blockades would continue to assist the encirclement of places like Malaga (1487). In the Bay of Biscay, the 14th and 15th centuries saw abundant corsair activity against Gascon trade. The Castilian navy also played an important naval role in the Hundred Years' War. This was the result of the closer alliance between France and Castile after the mid-14th century. The Castilian navy thus fought the battles of Winchelsea (1350) and La Rochelle (1372), apart from many marine assaults and raids on English coastal towns between 1375 and 1381, and again in 1405. Castilian participation waned in the final stages of the war, though they still did support the French conquest of Normandy (Ladero Quesada 2010: 437–444). The dynastic union with Aragon entailed a complete redesign of the geopolitical map of Europe, as well as the end of more than a century of the French-Castilian alliance.

Ideology of war

The ideals derived from the *Reconquista* and the Crusade were ever present in Castile during the 14th and 15th centuries. As they had been in the previous period, both ideological narratives permeated the ongoing conflict with Muslims. On the other hand, the conflicts with other Christian kingdoms found their legitimacy in less noble ideals: territory or dynastic rights. It would be the war on Islam that would be the true crucible of warfare ideology, and the key ingredient to the legitimacy of the Castilian monarchy itself (García Fitz 2010).

Royal chronicles are dotted with examples of this ideology. The introduction to the *Crónica de Alfonso X*, written by Fernán Sánchez in Valladolid around 1340, reveals that the main events described focus on the war of the kings of Castile and Leon in defence of Catholicism, who would risk their lives in their mission to expel Muslims from Spain. Together with the religious gloss, there was a historical justification, derived from the right that Castile had to recover the lands lost by their ancestors to the Muslim invasion of 711. The chronicle written by Fernando del Pulgar explains how in 1489 the Ottoman sultan protested to the pope because of the Catholic King's harassment of the Kingdom of Granada, and requested that conquered lands be returned. Isabel and Fernando responded by saying that these lands had previously been held by their Christian forefathers. This placed Muslim domination within the realm of tyranny, not legality, rendering any attempts by the kings of Castile or Leon to recover those lands as a legitimate effort to restore a previous situation.

Throughout the 14th and 15th centuries the campaigns against the Marinids and Granada were considered by the Holy See as an ongoing Crusade. The war on Muslims endowed the Castilian monarchy with enormous prestige; after all, the only ongoing successful crusades in Christendom were those carried out by Castile. The military successes of Alfonso XI were well publicized throughout Europe. Edward III wrote to the Castilian king to congratulate him on the victory of the Battle of Rio Salado (1340) and the conquest of Algeciras (1344). Indeed, the latter siege was so renowned that it was mentioned in diverse books of that time such as the chronicles of Jean le Bel, or of the Florentine Giovanni Villani, Boccaccio's *Decameron* and the *Canterbury Tales*. The culmination of this was the official recognition and title of Catholic Kings awarded to Isabel and Fernando by Pope Innocent VIII after the fall of Granada (Arias 2012: 84–89).

In fact, the Crusade was an alignment of Papal and Castilian interests, albeit priorities were not always the same. As in the 13th century, the monarchy often tried to relegate the pope to a secondary position, in virtue of their leadership in the conflict. Campaigns against the Muslims were considered a Crusade, but they were nevertheless always described as Castilian – or at most

Hispanic – wars. The *Crónica de Alfonso XI* considered the victory at Rio Salado as more important than the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212) because, among other reasons, it had been achieved without foreign assistance. This was taken to the extreme with Jiménez de Rada also playing down the role of European and papal crusaders in the Navas de Tolosa campaign. A similar view is again stressed in *Crónica de Alfonso XI*. The royal chronicler fawned over the prestige of the king, which attracted crusaders from far and wide to participate in the siege of Algeciras due to their desire to fight by the glorious king's side. In fact, even though this was a crusade sanctioned by the pope, Alfonso XI was depicted as the only leader. Castilian chronicles always downplayed this presence of foreign crusaders in all campaigns against al-Andalus. This would reach a point of almost ridicule, when their inadequacy for and ignorance of Hispanic warfare was underlined. These ideas would also become literary *topoi*, repeated for centuries.

Such was the internal and external prestige derived from the Crusade against the Muslims that it would become a defining characteristic of the Castilian monarchy. The *Crónica de Alfonso XI* was very clear regarding the two tasks that God had entrusted the king with: impart justice and fight the Muslims. The success regarding the war against Granada would be the measure of any king's reign after his death. The *Crónica de Pedro I* recalled how the death of Alfonso XI had saddened the whole kingdom, for he had brought glory to Castile through his military successes against Islam.

Naturally, royal chronicles were the main vehicles for transmitting the ideological narrative of the monarchy, but they were not alone in this. Royal chancery diplomas were also used to transmit royal prestige derived from victories over the Muslims. Another mechanism was by extending the *intitulatio*. A consequence of the annexation of new land to Castile was the possibility to include them in the official title of the king. The more land that was annexed, the more successful the king was. In 1344, Alfonso XI included Algeciras in his *intitulatio*, while Enrique IV did the same with Gibraltar after 1462. Although none of these places ranked as kingdoms, they were still included in the official title. Again, it would be under the Catholic Kings that this trend would reach its peak. Their marriage had generated an astonishing list of titles which the new conquests were not making smaller. The importance of the latest conquests would place them well ahead. Granada would adopt a pre-eminent position, in front of Toledo, in the long list of realms. A final way in which royal military prestige was extolled was through the dates of royal diplomas. Alfonso XI, for example, would use his renowned military victories to gloss the date on all royal privileges after 1340.

Many campaigns were also bestowed with abundant rituals, including many ceremonies glorifying victories which served to laud the role of the king and

the monarchical institution. The most common commemoration included a royal entrance, followed by a procession and a thanksgiving mass. After his triumph at the Rio Salado, Alfonso XI returned to Seville and celebrated his triumph. Similarly, Fernando the Catholic King held one in Cordova after the successful summer of 1486, when the towns of Loja, Íllora and Moclín were subdued. Castilian kings were not the sole protagonists of these celebrations. Throughout the 15th century they would often be used to acclaim other important figures. *Infante* Fernando, uncle and regent of Juan II, designed a complicated ceremony after the conquest of Antequera, including a prior trip to Seville to borrow the sword of Fernando III from the cathedral. After the city was taken, he returned triumphantly to Seville, bearing a giant cross, the standard of the Crusade, the standards of Saint James, Seville and Saint Isidore of Leon, as well as the sword of the holy king he had borrowed earlier. After leading a procession through the city, and the unavoidable religious ceremony in the cathedral, the sword of Fernando III was ostensibly put back in its place. This complex ritual associated the *Infante* with the crusading spirit, and made him a worthy descendant of Fernando III, his glorious conquering ancestor. The whole ceremony was part of his political programme, destined to exalt himself, a move no doubt aimed at securing his claim to the throne of Aragon two years later.

A final aspect to be considered is that the war on the Muslims was a key element used to construct royal memory. Some Castilian kings erected monuments to commemorate military victories, others chose to associate their place of burial with their military triumph. In 1343, Alfonso XI ordered the building of a new church in Cordova in honour of Saint Hippolytus, his birthday's saint day, to exalt his victory at the Battle of Rio Salado. It was the king's desire to be buried in that temple, along with his father Fernando IV. Construction, however, took so long that their bodies were only finally transferred there in 1736. Similarly, Isabel the Catholic Queen ordered her interment in Granada. The queen's wish was for her memory to be forever related with the great milestone of her reign, the culmination of the *Reconquista*.

Main campaigns

During the 14th and 15th centuries, Castile was involved in many kinds of war, with peace actually being rare and short. Political instability was predominant during the minorities of Fernando IV and Alfonso XI, or the reigns of Pedro I, Juan II and Enrique IV. Constant confrontation between the main noble

factions also caused many lower-intensity conflicts, although full-scale civil wars did break out on two occasions in the dispute for the throne, namely the Castilian Civil War and the Castilian War of Succession.

The Castilian Civil War (1366-1369)

The Castilian Civil War was a conflict that was closely related to the Hundred Years' War. The tyrannical reign of Pedro I alienated most Castilian nobility, who rallied to support his illegitimate brother Enrique of Trastámara as an alternative for the throne. In 1366, Enrique invaded Castile with the military support of Aragon and France. The superiority of Enrique's army was only enhanced by his mercenary troops, who were veterans from the Hundred Years' War, led by Bertrand du Guesclin. Pedro I was forced to flee, allowing Enrique to be proclaimed king in Burgos. The latter crossed the kingdom unhindered, receiving the allegiance of the nobility and cities on his way. Pedro I fled to Portugal, and then to Aquitaine, where he garnered the support of England. In early 1367, an army led by Edward of Woodstock – the fabled Black Prince – crossed the Pyrenees and entered Castile. Enrique II tried to stop his advance near Vitoria, but the English army just turned eastwards. On 3 April, near Nájera, both sides prepared for a pitched battle.

The Battle of Nájera was a terrible loss inflicted on Enrique, who barely escaped captivity. Pedro I, however, was incapable of seizing the opportunity to restore his authority. On the one hand, he did not attempt to regain the loyalty of the nobility through a more conciliatory policy. On the other, he refused to make good on his many promises to the Black Prince – a handsome sum of money and the lordship of Biscay. The English troops left that same year, prompting Enrique to re-invade the kingdom after he rebuilt his army.

The loyalty of the kingdom was split evenly and no side was able to vanquish the other militarily. In 1369, Enrique's troops intercepted Pedro I in Montiel, who was on his way to help break the siege on Toledo. After being defeated, Pedro I sought shelter in a nearby castle, and tried to negotiate his escape with Du Guesclin, but he was betrayed and turned over to Enrique. The two half-brothers, upon encountering each other, fought it out and Enrique, with the help of his men, murdered Pedro I. Although some locations in Galicia or Andalusia resisted until 1371, the Trastámara dynasty was now securely on the throne.

The Castilian War of Succession (1474-1479)

Upon Enrique IV's death in 1474, his sister Isabel and his daughter Juana disputed the succession. Isabel considered she could rightfully succeed her brother because the daughter was, after all, supposedly illegitimate. Rumour had it that Juana was not the king's daughter, but the sinful fruit of a love affair between Queen Juana of Portugal and the royal *privado*, Beltrán de la Cueva – which earned Princess Juana the nickname 'la Beltraneja'. Isabel was married to Fernando, heir prince to Aragon, which was sufficient to earn the support of Aragon to her claim. Juana's advocates, in turn, found the support of Portugal, whose king Afonso V was the uncle of Juana and became engaged to the heir princess and promised military support. In 1475 the Portuguese king entered Castile, married his niece and joined forces with Juana's supporters. The cities of Castile chose their allegiances, and Fernando summoned his Aragonese army and marched towards Toro, which was beleaguered by Afonso V.

For months both armies combined sieges with strategic movements, seeking to fight a pitched battle in favourable conditions. At last, the Portuguese troops abandoned the siege of Zamora and headed back to Toro in March 1476. Upon seeing this, Fernando started pursuing them. Afonso V was thus forced to fight outside Toro, and he was defeated. After the battle, many of Juana's supporters joined the winning side, but this did not end a conflict that would last three more years. That time was spent by Isabel and Fernando recovering the cities that had been taken by Juana, and pushing back a second Portuguese invasion in the Battle of La Albuera in 1479. The Treaty of Alcáçovas was signed in that year, and Portugal recognized Isabel as the legitimate queen of Castile.

Wars against other Christian kingdoms

Politically speaking, the Christian kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula had been closely related and interconnected since the 12th century. It was common for the nobility to own lordships and enjoy privileges in more than one kingdom. It was also almost natural for kings to become involved in the internal affairs of neighbouring kingdoms. Royal marriages between kingdoms were a sound way of maintaining border stability, which is why they were so common. Violence, however, was not factored out of the equation. Castile had several border disputes with Portugal, Navarre and Aragon throughout these centuries. The two major conflicts would be the War of the Two Pedros (1356–1366) against Aragon – which would eventually mutate into the civil conflict described above – and the War of Portugal (1383–1385), both of which are described in the chapters dealing with those kingdoms.

The war against Granada

There is little doubt that the predominant military activity in this period in Castile dealt with the border with the Kingdom of Granada. During the first half of the 14th century it focused on the Battle of the Strait. In 1309, Castile conquered Gibraltar; and Alfonso XI's successful campaigns of 1327 and 1330 prompted Granada to intensify its alliance with the Marinid Sultanate across the sea to halt further Castilian encroachment. Abu al-Hasan won Gibraltar back in 1333 and laid siege to Tarifa in 1340. The damage would have caused losing the last position in the Strait of Gibraltar led Alfonso XI to challenge the Marinids in order to defend it. The Castilian army, together with the support of Afonso IV of Portugal, soundly defeated the Muslim forces at the Battle of Rio Salado.

This victory saved Tarifa and changed the momentum, with Castile once again taking the initiative. In the summer of 1342, Alfonso XI laid siege to Algeciras, the third town that provided control over the Strait. After nearly two years of beleaguerment, the city fell. In 1350 the Castilian king died of the plague while laying siege to Gibraltar. Despite his unexpected death, the campaigns of Alfonso XI established Castilian domination over the Strait of Gibraltar and thus isolated Granada, effectively ending any further North-African invasion in support of al-Andalus.

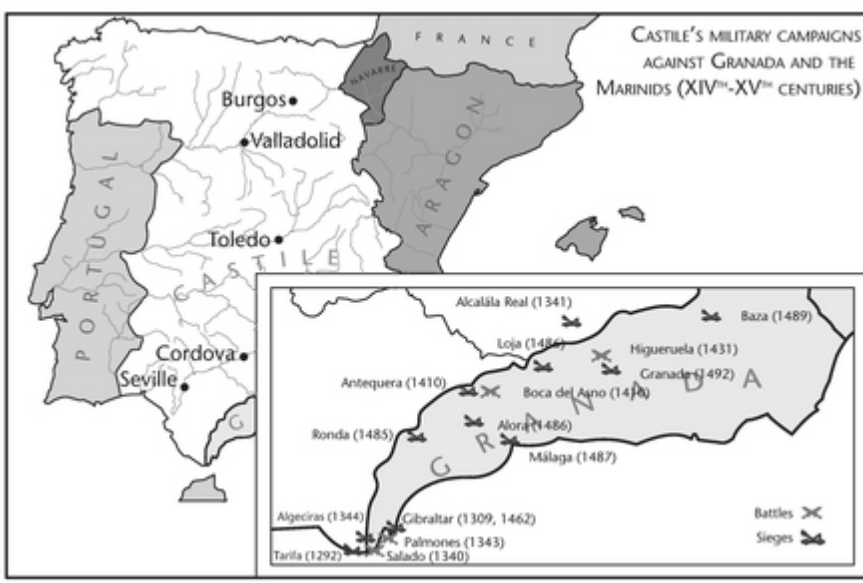


FIGURE 3.20 Castile's campaigns against Granada. (© Rubén Cascado and Fernando Arias Guillén)

Despite having only 300,000 people, less than a tenth the population of

Castile, Granada was able to survive for a further century and a half. Several factors can help explain this resilience: the mountainous topography, which made the territory easily defendable, the diplomatic ability of Muhammad V (r. 1354–1359 and 1362–1391), and Castilian internal instability and conflicts with other Christian kingdoms. Border warfare was kept up in intensity, despite truces; but for several decades Castile did not carry out any military campaigns. *Infante* Fernando, uncle and regent of Juan II – and future king of Aragon – recommenced large-scale warfare in the early 15th century. In 1407, he took Zahara, and three years later the city of Antequera, right in the heart of the Nasrid kingdom. However, war ceased again for several more decades. The Battle of Higueruela (1431), outside the gates of Granada, and the conquest of Gibraltar (1462) were the only two relevant campaigns of these decades.

During Juan II's reign, chronicles already spoke plainly of the need to end the Muslim presence in the Iberian Peninsula, with the Nasrid kingdom looking increasingly helpless. The end, however, would not come until the War of Granada (1482–1492), the large-scale effort carried out by the Catholic Kings, aiming to end the *Reconquista* once and for all. The Kingdom of Granada was divided into factions. Abu al-Hasan ʿAli ibn Sad – known in Castilian chronicles as *Muley Hacén* – and his brother Muhammad XIII – also known as *Abdullah ez Zagal* – were in favour of resisting at any cost. On the other side, the son of al-Hasan, Abu ʿAbdallah Muhammad XII – known in Castile as *Boabdil* – pursued a conciliatory policy. Despite internal dissent, the conquest of Granada was no simple feat for Castile.

An exceptional determination and economic sacrifice was needed for Castile to subdue the beleaguered cities. The sieges of Malaga (1487) and Baza (1489) were especially difficult and costly. Malaga had great walls, more than a hundred towers, a fortress and a castle at Gibralfaro, overlooking the city. The scarcity of gunpowder and supplies, as well as the tenacity of the defenders almost broke the besieging army. Nevertheless, after three and a half months, the famished city surrendered in August 1487.

The siege of Baza was even more difficult because the dense vegetation hampered the use of the artillery. This urged the Castilians to resort to traditional siege warfare, which meant encircling the city and waiting. The logistical challenge was enormous, as well as the expense incurred. Two camps were built, as well as 15 earthenware fortresses to protect the besieging army. Two months were employed to build the six-mile wall surrounding the city, 4,000 workers were used to cut down the forest, and 6,000 to prepare roads and divert the streams. In November 1489, after five and a half months of siege, the city surrendered.

The siege of Granada was even longer than that of Baza, with the army needing to encircle the city for seven months, but it was not as challenging.

Nonetheless, the monarchy financed the building of stone houses for the troops, thus creating a new town which still exists today: Santa Fe. The Nasrid capital finally sued for surrender on 2 January 1492. Almost eight centuries after the Muslim invasion of the Iberian Peninsula, Isabel and Fernando had completed the *Reconquista* (O'Callaghan 2014: 121–196).

Notes

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4
Crown of Aragon

Mario Lafuente Gómez

I Early and High Middle Ages

Feudal conquest and colonization (10th to 13th centuries)

Political outline

On the eve of the year 1000, the peninsular territories between the Pyrenean Cordillera, the Iberian System and the Mediterranean Sea housed a complex network of political structures, poorly integrated with each other and very heterogeneous in social, economic and cultural terms. Three hundred years later, however, these territories were organized into three great spaces of sovereignty, placed under the authority of three feudal monarchies and internally very coherent. These three areas were the Crown of Castile, the kingdom of Navarre and the Crown of Aragon, which included practically the entire southern fringe of the Pyrenees, most of the Ebro valley, the south-eastern half of the Iberian Cordillera and a large part of the Mediterranean coast. In total, approximately 103,000 km^2 divided, unequally, into three different states: Aragon, which occupied about 48,000 km^2; Catalonia, with approximately 32,000 km^2; and Valencia, the dimensions of which exceeded 23,000 km^2. Moreover, at the end of the 13th century, the kingdom of Majorca was also linked to the dynasty that ruled the Crown of Aragon, because it had been an Aragonese monarch, Jaime I, who had conquered it in a war fought against the Almohad Empire (1229). Nevertheless, in his will, Jaime I decided that the kingdom of Majorca was to be separated from the rest of the peninsular possessions and yielded to a different heir than the one that was going to receive the rest of the Crown. In this way, Majorca initiated a stage of autonomy that extended between 1276 and 1344, when King Pedro IV recovered it by military means.

The political and territorial configuration of each of the states that made up the Crown of Aragon was a consequence of the process of feudalization experienced by the Pyrenean societies from the 10th century, which was also accompanied by a sustained population growth and an intense transformation of economic structures. All these factors provided the necessary material bases for the ideology of holy war and crusade, two cultural traits widely disseminated among the agents of political power. These, in a general way, took on the role of defending Christianity using violence against the enemies of the faith, that is, against the Islamic powers that extended their dominion over most of the Peninsula. The development of this ideology gave meaning to the aristocracy's aspirations for power and spurred the conquest and feudal colonization of the territories under the Andalusian powers from the first half of the 8th century, the borders of which lay north towards the Pyrenees and the right margin of the river Llobregat.

The chronological sequence of this process can be summarized in two clearly differentiated stages, the turning point for which was in 1134–1137. Before this moment, there were three main powers: in the western half, the kingdom of Pamplona, which in the times of Sancho III (1004–1035) included the counties of Aragon, Sobrarbe and Ribagorza; in the eastern half, the county of Barcelona, which since the year 1000 was linked to the counties of Besalú, Gerona, Osona and Cerdaña; and, finally, in the south of both areas, occupying practically the whole Ebro basin and its main tributaries, the Muslim kingdom of Zaragoza, which retained political and military hegemony over the rest of the Islamic powers that arose in the north-eastern Peninsula.

This landscape began to change after the death of Sancho III of Pamplona, in 1035, when the old domains located under his sovereignty were distributed to his four sons. The oldest of them, Ramiro, who was born from an illicit relationship, inherited the old county of Aragon and he soon incorporated the counties of Sobrarbe and Ribagorza, and embarked on a policy of territorial expansion at the expense of the kingdom of Zaragoza. His successors Sancho Ramirez (1063–1094), Pedro I (1094–1104) and Alfonso I (1104–1134), already entitled *kings of Aragon*, continued with this policy until they came to dominate practically the entire Ebro valley. The power of the Aragonese kings, at this time, is well reflected in the incorporation of the kingdom of Pamplona, which remained under its sovereignty between 1076 and 1134. However, on the second of these two dates, the death of Alfonso I with no heirs generated a dynastic crisis that lasted until 1137.

The resolution of the dynastic crisis that followed the death of 'the Battler' king meant, in the first place, the separation of the kingdom of Pamplona, where the aristocracy proclaimed their own king, García Ramírez, one of the most powerful magnates of the previous period. For their part, the Aragonese

aristocracy recognized as the sovereign the younger brother of Alfonso I, Ramiro II (1134–1157), who was then the bishop of Roda de Isábena, in Ribagorza. King Ramiro married Inés de Poitiers and fathered a daughter, Petronila, who, shortly after her birth, in 1137, was betrothed to the count of Barcelona Ramon Berenguer IV (1131–1162). Thus, the matrimonial alliance between Petronila and Ramon Berenguer gave rise to the dynastic union of the kingdom of Aragon and the Catalan counties located around Barcelona, a fact that has been traditionally considered as the origin of the Crown of Aragon. All these territories remained under the sovereignty of the descendants of Ramon Berenguer and Petronila, although both the monarchy and the hegemonic social groups always respected the differentiated character of the two original political entities (Aragon and the Catalan counties). However, they all had a clear common interest, which was the conquest and colonization of the territory dominated by the Muslims. Therefore, Catalans and Aragonese were organized together to incorporate the cities of Lerida and Tortosa (linked to Catalonia) and Teruel (united to Aragon), together with the kingdoms of Majorca and Valencia, which were shaped as differentiated entities. In this way, the process of the territorial expansion of the Crown of Aragon in the Iberian Peninsula was concluded in the third quarter of the 13th century.

Recruitment system and composition of the armies

Military obligations and recruitment methods

From the middle of the 11th century, the kingdom of Aragon and the Catalan counties experienced, like the rest of the northern peninsular societies, a process of feudalization that took shape, among other manifestations, in a progressive aggregation of powers under a principle of common sovereignty, accepted by the dominant groups and expressed through an emblematic figure inspired by ancient tradition, namely the king, in Aragon, and the county, in the Catalonian territories. The agents involved in this process retained a strong internal hierarchy and secured their cohesion through a dense network of dissymmetric alliances, in which the superior powers aspired to preserve the fidelity of those below them by means of the regular transfer of material goods. In return, they agreed to correspond with a benefit proportional to the amount of the benefit received. This is, generally, the military factor that the feudovassal contract prescribed through the formula of *auxilium* and that, over time, was integrated and developed in the different legal traditions embodied

in the *Fueros* (see Glossary) of Aragón (1247), the *Usatges* of Barcelona (1251) and the *Furs* of Valencia (1238).

In Aragon, the most widespread term used to call this was *honor* (see Glossary), which corresponds to the generic word used to name those fiefs linked to the barons and which, according to the *Fueros of the barons and infanzones of Aragon* (c.1100), required their beneficiaries to provide military service for three months a year (Laliena Corbera 1996: 237; Lema Pueyo 1997: 207–209). This rule, however, entered into crisis at the end of the 12th century, during the reigns of Alfonso II (1162–1196) and, especially, Pedro II (1196–1213). Thus, in order to continue assuring the military availability of the aristocracy, the Aragonese monarchy began to distribute money fiefs among their members which, in Aragon, initially received the name of *caballerías* (see Glossary) and consisted of lots of 500 *sueldos* annual amounts, charged to regular sources of income and which – at least *a priori* – were stable. The beneficiaries of the *caballerías* were obliged to place a man at arms, fully equipped, at the service of the king when required to do so, and to keep him at his service for a maximum of three months. During the 13th century, the number of stock exchanges in Aragon and Catalonia continued to increase as a result of noble pressure and the policy of territorial expansion to the detriment of the Islamic powers (Lafuente Gómez 2016: 183).

Likewise, the exercise of feudal power also led to the development of specific rules for military mobilization, which in Navarre and Aragon were collected within the different local laws. Generally, the authority that the jurisdictional lord had to control the communities' military force was called *servicio de hueste* (see Glossary), although there were also other names, depending on the conditions of the service and its scope of application (Sesma Muñoz 2002: 24–25). This principle authorized the lords to mobilize their own vassals militarily, with the possibility of even acting outside their municipalities and therefore carrying out offensive actions. From the beginning, this provision could be redeemed by paying an economic contribution, the payment of which was distributed among the vassals affected by the mobilization order (Lema Pueyo 1997: 210–219). In the Catalan area, from the 12th century the *usatge* entitled *Princeps namque* according to which the prince could demand the mobilization of all his subjects and vassals to go to his defence in the event of a siege (Ferrer i Mallol 2001: 156–162).

The rules used to execute military service obligations were closely related to the legal status and social profile of future combatants. In the case of the feudal aristocracy, military mobilization began with a personal notification, addressed to all beneficiaries of fiefs by direct concession of the monarch, which required the recruitment of a number of troops equivalent to the amount of the benefit received. Until well into the 13th century, this type of appeal was mostly oral,

so we can only access the details of its operation in an indirect way. However, from the reign of Jaime I (1213–1276), the notifications began to be written and kept in the archives of the royal chancery. The procedure indicated in this type of document is essentially practical: once the motive justifying the call was indicated, the king went on to demand the military mobilization of his vassals, together with his own militia and to indicate the day and the place where they all should meet. In the copies of the calls kept in the royal archive, the names of the recipients are grouped by categories, annotated in hierarchical order, beginning with the most distinguished subjects, that is, the barons. In some cases, it also specifies, along with the name of each recipient, the legal argument that justified his call, that is, the specific justification to which the king appealed to demand the benefit (an *honor* or a money fief).

Moreover, the recruitment of the popular militias was regulated by local laws and was organized by the municipal authorities. The system used for the mobilization of these types of troops began in a way very similar to the procedure explained in the case of the feudal aristocracy, that is, the king directed his letters of notification to the municipal powers so that they would set in motion the system of recruiting their troops. From there, the practices of recruitment were organized according to territorial standards, so that the neighbours of the towns were organized in districts or neighbourhoods, in which a number of combatants previously established had to be recruited. In this sense, it is important to note that some towns enjoyed a broad autonomy to mobilize their own militias, as reflected in some municipal privileges. Of particular note is the privilege granted by Alfonso I to Zaragoza in 1129, according to which the citizen authorities had the power to call out the municipal militia without prior authorization from the king, either to act against any external threat or to respond to an aggression previously suffered by one of its neighbours. In Catalonia, this function was called *somatén*.

Composition of the armies

Personal guards of monarchs

Since the Early Middle Ages, aristocratic elites located in the north-eastern area of the Iberian Peninsula showed a clear tendency to organize themselves through courtly or palace institutions, generating a circle of power known as *curia*. Among the most important functions of the members of the *curia* was, generally, the exercise of the *militia*, aimed at defending the sovereign and, if

necessary, fighting under his command. Thus, in some documents dated from the end of the 10th century, the monarch's entourage was mentioned using expressions such as *omni militia palatii* (985) or, shortly afterwards, *omnes seniores Aragonenses vel Pampilonenses in unum* (988–989). Later, in the first third of the 11th century, during the reign of Sancho III the Elder of Pamplona (1004–1035), the records began to offer explicit references to eminent members of the king's household, who were usually quoted together with the position occupied by each one of them. The whole of the royal household was referred to, at that time, by the expression *curia palacii regis* and, in a prominent position, at the front, was the steward (*mayordomo*, see Glossary), often quoted together with the bottler and the equerry.

From the year 1000, the relationship between the sovereigns and the members of their court began to be established as a feudal-vassalage contract. This change, which has been defined by Carlos Laliena Corbera as a 'silent revolution', increased the military control of the monarchy, while helping to consolidate the power of the aristocracy at both local and regional level (Laliena Corbera 1996). Above all, however, it significantly strengthened the military function of the members of the royal entourage, such that during the 11th century the closest barons to the king became collectively known as *scola regis* or *masnata*, terms with clear military connotations. It was, certainly, a group of highly qualified combatants in charge of, among other duties, guarding the king. However, from the 11th century onwards, sources tend to identify them by reference to the fiefs they had, because this last feature apparently gave more prestige than holding a position in the royal household (Laliena Corbera 1996: 271; Lema Pueyo 1997: 62–86).

Noble militias

The seigneurial militias were army corps mobilized by lords with authority and material resources to militarily recruit their own vassals and the men located in their lordships. In the Crown of Aragon, the origin of this seigneurial faculty lies, on the one hand, in the relationship established within the aristocracy and, on the other hand, in the mechanisms of exploitation articulated between that same aristocracy and the peasantry subjected to their dominion, depending on the status of servitude. Hence, when discussing the composition and functioning of this type of militia, it is important to consider that there were two different social groups, whose functions were also technically very different. The first of these consisted of the vassals linked to the seigneurial power by means of a feudal-vassal contract, which meant a

form of honourable dependence. Normally, these individuals appeared equipped as heavy or light cavalry. The second group was that which reunited the subjects subdued to the seigneurial dominion in a strict sense, either through a servile status or to other less coercive forms of social dominance. In this second case, the recruited troops used to act as foot soldiers.

From a functional point of view, it should be noted that the magnitude and qualification of the seigneurial militias were directly related to the size of the lordship, meaning that those lords with more vassals and possessions were in a better position to raise a more complete and effective troop. It should also be noted that the equipment and maintenance of the militias depended directly on the nature of the conflict for which they had been recruited. In the event of a defensive war or if the lord summoned the militia for a private war, the community had to bear the costs of recruiting and sending off the troops. Nevertheless, when the lord responded with troops from his domain to an order issued by a superior (usually the monarchy), for an offensive campaign, the cost of the militia was borne by that same power. Occasionally, these costs could be financed by the lord, as a gesture of generosity and in expectation of future gratification. In fact, members of the secular aristocracy who owned lordships often invested part of their income in acquiring combat equipment which, if necessary, was employed by members of their own militias.

The works carried out until now on the feudal conquest of the Islamic kingdoms of Majorca and Valencia, in the central decades of the 13th century, provide some examples of the recruitment and composition of seigneurial militias in these conflicts. In both cases, they were offensive interventions, directed by the monarchy and oriented towards the conquest and colonization of new territories, so the intervention of the aristocracy was permanently conditioned by the possibilities of participating directly in the successive distributions of lands and jurisdictional issues (Guinot Rodríguez 1996; Torró Abad 1999).

Urban militias

The municipal militias were popular troops, recruited from social groups outside the nobility, under the direction of their own local authorities. The regulation of this type of companies begins very early, as much in Aragon and Navarre as in the Catalan counties, and was a consequence, firstly, of practical needs. Indeed, in a context of territorial expansion, based on a systematic and organized use of violence, it was essential to have the human and material resources to defend the territory itself and, if necessary, carry out military

actions of conquest and colonization. Consequently, all the sovereigns made efforts to implement the necessary means so that these objectives could be achieved and so that, at the same time, their own authority would not be threatened by the aristocracy, which had similar means to mobilize the population under its dominion. Secondly, it must be borne in mind that the organization of the council militias was strongly conditioned by cultural factors, since the military role of each member of the troop was determined by their position within the social hierarchy. In this way, members of the local elite were mobilized generally as cavalry combatants, while most of the population had to take on the role of foot soldiers.

In Navarre and Aragon, legislation aimed at regulating the meaning and organization of the municipal militias, in the Early Middle Ages, evolved out from the urban statutes established in the second half of the 11th century. The starting point can be found in the *Fuero* of Jaca (1076/1077), which transferred the military obligations of the low nobility to the bourgeois of the city, that is, it limited military service to three days a year, and only in the event of pitched battle or siege of one of the king's castles. This principle was progressively extended to numerous Navarrese and Aragonese towns, including the cities of Zaragoza and Tudela (1119). After the conquest of the Ebro valley, the legal articulation of the municipal militias exhibited an extraordinary thrust, a phenomenon which was reflected above all in the increase of the statutes that intended, not only to regulate the military obligations of the community, but also to organize their functions in the event of combat.

In general, all these rules defined the local elite in essentially aristocratic terms, which meant that all those neighbours with resources to maintain fighting equipment and a horse automatically enjoyed the privileges of the low nobility. In addition, this social group was configured as an oligarchy, because its social superiority was also recognized within the control of local power organs. This principle is found in the laws of Calatayud, Daroca, Soria, Borobia (applied in Monzón, in 1130, and Artasona, in 1134) and Teruel (1177), which were, in turn, the starting point for several laws of a local and regional scope, applied throughout the kingdom and finally assembled in the legal compilation of 1247 (Lema Pueyo 1997: 209–219; Sesma Muñoz 2002: 29–32).

The practical sense of the municipal militias was widely shown during the period of territorial expansion in Levante, which ended in the conquest of the kingdom of Valencia, between 1232 and 1274. According to the *Llibre dels feits*, the personal chronicle of Jaime I, the militia of Teruel was directly involved in the conquests of Arés and Morella in 1233 and also in the occupation of Burriana, in that same year, together with the troops of Daroca. After the conquest of Puig de Santa María, its fortress was rebuilt by the militias of Teruel, Daroca and Zaragoza, while a company of 70 to 80 horsemen from

Teruel took charge of defending it from the Muslim attacks. Still in 1276, in the context of a major insurrection launched by the Muslims of Valencia two years earlier, the king summoned the militias of Teruel and Daroca with supplies for two months (Sesma Muñoz 2002: 29–32).

Military order troops

The establishment of religious orders aimed at undertaking war against Islam began in the eastern territories of the Iberian Peninsula in the 1120s and 1130s, coinciding with the conquest and feudal colonization of the Ebro valley and New Catalonia. As in the rest of the Mediterranean world, this phenomenon was driven by the spirit of crusade that had permeated Christianity since the end of the 11th century and which, in Navarre and Aragon, had become evident in the campaign that ended in the conquest of Zaragoza, in 1118. From the military point of view, the development of this type of institution in the territories of the Crown of Aragon comprised three phases, the most important aspects of which we will summarize below.

The first stage began around 1120 and concluded in 1134. During this period, Alfonso I, king of Aragon and Navarre, founded two military brotherhoods, to which he assigned two fortresses located in the middle of the border with Islam, south of the Ebro valley, which were the Belchite militia, founded in 1122 or 1123, and the one from Monreal del Campo, created between 1124 and 1130 (Lema Pueyo 1997: 219–221). In both cases, they were associations that brought together prominent members of the Aragonese, Navarre, Castilian and Catalan aristocracy, gathered around a common goal: to fight against Muslims, harassing and disturbing them constantly, while respecting those who were already under the sovereignty of any of the Christian states. The second phase lasted between 1134 and 1164, and was characterized by the creation of the great lordships – called *encomiendas* – of the military orders of the Temple, the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre in the kingdom of Aragon and the Catalan counties subjected to the sovereignty of Ramon Berenguer IV. Finally, the third stage covered the reigns of Alfonso II (1164–1196) and Pedro II (1196–1213). This period saw the establishment of two military orders of Castilian origin in the kingdom of Aragon, Calatrava (1179) and Santiago (1210). The arrival of these two new orders to the Crown of Aragon was a consequence of the rapprochement between the Aragonese and Castilian monarchies, who, in the central decades of the 12th century, went through a phase of synchronization in their respective territorial expansion projects (Sesma Muñoz 2002: 32–34).

The *encomiendas* handed over by the monarchs to the military orders functioned as lordships, governed from a fortress where the commander, the order's friars, and a number of persons in charge of logistic tasks resided. The number of knights permanently stationed in the fortresses was quite low, so the true potential of each *encomienda* depended on the economic prosperity of its lordships and, at the same time, on the social networks around the dignities of the order, beginning with the commander. We know, for example, that in the *encomienda* of Castellote, belonging to the Order of the Hospital, there were two or three friars at the beginning of the 13th century (1205–1210), four in the middle of the century (1238–1244) and a maximum of nine at the end of that century (1246–1280). In Alcañiz, the head fortress of the Order of Calatrava, a constant progression was also seen during that same century, going from 12 (1200–1210) to 15 (1240–1250) and then to 20 (1270–1280). Furthermore, in Montalbán, the head of the Order of Santiago, the number of friars permanently resident there during the 13th century was between 10 and 20 (Sesma Muñoz 2002: 32–34).

FIGURE 4.1 Wall paintings at the Castle of Alcañiz (Aragon), belonging to the Order of Calatrava, 14th century. (Photography by Mario Lafuente Gómez)

Castle garrisons and tenancies

The fortifications management system in the territories of the Crown of Aragon had its roots in the process of the strengthening of the real and condal power experienced from the first years of the 11th century, when, as much in the Navarrese-Aragonese as in the Catalan region, the establishment and consolidation of the feudal-vassalage contract took place as a way to seal the alliances between the different members of the aristocratic group. Among other elements, the transfer of fortifications was one of the elements used by the most powerful agents of feudal society – that is, the Navarrese and Aragonese kings and the Catalan counts – in order to obtain the loyalty of the aristocracy. In return, the beneficiaries of the transfer had to undertake to manage the fortification properly and defend it, in the event of war, making use of its own resources (Lema Pueyo 1997: 147–176). From that starting point, over time and, more specifically, between the end of the 11th century and the beginning of the 12th century, the monarchy and the county powers transmitted to the aristocracy the power to inherit the dominion of these fortresses, together with the incomes and rights linked to them, giving rise to the lordships. This phenomenon, however, was not homogeneous in all territories since, after the conquest of the Ebro valley, the monarchy tended to reserve control of ever wider territories for itself, a policy that mainly affected the towns and the rural areas located at the external borders of the Crown.

As a consequence of this process, the system of management and government of the fortifications was divided into two broad groups: on the one hand, the direct dominion of the monarchy; on the other, the domain of any other lord. In both spaces, however, the government of the fortifications was exercised by a lieutenant recruited among the intermediate and lower nobility. In the earliest sources, the expressions used to designate these officers refer to two distinct linguistic heritages: the first, predominant in the eastern territories, is of Latin origin and includes names such as *castelli custos*, *castellanus*, *castellán* or *castlan*; the second one, more widespread in the Navarre-Aragonese area and, from the 13th century, in the kingdom of Valencia, comes from an Arab tradition, clearly embodied in terms such as *alcaede*, *alkaide*, *alcaite* and *alcait*. In current Castilian, these two traditions have given rise to the words *castellán* and *alcaide* (see Glossary), two terms that, beyond their different etymology, evoke a similar reality since the functions and competences of both positions are substantially the same.

However, the *alcaides* and *castellanos* were not the lords of their castles. In order to note this, the formula known as the 'custom of Spain' (*secundum morem regnum Hispanie*) was used in the Crown of Aragon. This practice, already documented in the Navarre-Aragonese territories during the reign of Alfonso I (1104–1134), meant the transfer of the fortress government, either for a period of time or for life. As an essential part of this pact, the lord undertook

to reward the person responsible for the fortress with an annual income called *retenencia* (see Glossary).

Chains of command

The organization of chains of command within the feudal armies, beginning in the year 1000, was defined by the military force of the different congregated powers. This meant that more powerful lords were able to get the most important positions in the management of conflicts. This principle, however, was compatible in practice with the existence of a series of positions, directly linked to the royal power, which were gaining authority with regard to military leadership and, therefore, the exercise of specific powers over the companies of men-at-arms as well as foot soldiers.

Among them, it is possible to point out the *dapifer* or *senescal* (see Glossary), a position of condal origin that continued in use after the dynastic union of 1137 and had great importance in the second half of the 12th century. The holders of such a position necessarily had to be men of authority widely recognized by the aristocracy, since their task was to command the royal company (*masnata regis*) and to supervise, if necessary, the management of all companies placed at the service of the king. More than likely, the position of *senescal* was created by the counts of Barcelona influenced by the French and, as in the neighbouring kingdom, it was occupied by distinguished figures of the highest aristocracy. During several generations, between the 12th and 14th centuries, several members of the Montcada family held this position, such as Guillem Ramón de Montcada, *senescal* between 1131 and 1173. Nevertheless, in 1330, Alfonso IV decided to end this tradition and granted it to his younger brother, the infant Pedro, who also received the right to transfer the position to his heirs (Ferrer i Mallol 2001: 188–189).

Likewise, regarding naval warfare, during the reign of Jaime I the figure of admiral of the king's navy was consolidated, a position held by Pedro Fernández (son of the king) and Ramon Marquet in 1269. A decade and a half later, with Pedro III, the same Ramon Marquet continued to hold an important position in this regard, along with Berenguer Mallol and Roger de Lauria, who stood out especially for his important victories during the fight for the kingdom of Sicily (1282–1301) (Ladero Quesada 2010: 431–437).

Military operations

Cavalry raids

The cavalry raids were, along with the sieges of fortifications, the most frequent military actions of all those carried out by the medieval armies of the Crown of Aragon, in line with medieval society's understanding and practice of war. The effectiveness of this type of operation depended on the ability to surprise the enemy and to act quickly enough not to suffer a counterattack, therefore light cavalry companies played a key role. Their objective was usually to destroy the population structures and the means of production of the enemy, not forgetting the possibility of capturing livestock, movable properties and, above all, people for whom they subsequently demanded an economic ransom. The system only authorized enslaving and putting on sale in the ever-populous slave market people with an Islamic background.

Regulations concerning the way to carry out the raids and, above all, the legal procedure to distribute properties obtained from them, is well explained in some of the legal codes written during the second half of the 12th century. Among them, we can highlight the law of Teruel (1170), in which special attention is given to the procedure of capture, conservation and distribution of the booty obtained in the raids carried out in the territory controlled by the Muslims. According to this code, a cavalry raid was an action directed by the authorities of the town (the Judge and the mayors) that should involve all the neighbours, so that those individuals who went out to fight as well as those who remained guarding the place all had the same right to receive a part of the booty. However, beyond this principle, there were differences of degree in the distribution of goods, in direct relation to the merits shown by each combatant during confrontation with the enemy (Castañé Llinás 1989: 573–597).

Siege warfare

Between the 11th and 13th centuries, and in the context of territorial expansion against Islam, the predominant strategy in the military organization of the feudal states was low-intensity war, directed towards the conquest of fortified places by means of sieges for shorter or longer periods of time. As is known, the siege of any fortification could begin several kilometres from the walls surrounding it, since the first objective of the attacking army was to isolate the fortress and its defenders, by controlling the surrounding territory and watchtowers. Once this phase was completed, the army could finally consider the conquest of the fortress and, for this, the most widespread strategy consisted of the systematic destruction of the defenders' supply

sources – the crops located in the immediate environment and, if possible, the interruption of the watercourses that supplied the population. In some cases, historical sources mention the construction of walls, with the aim of preventing the defenders from accessing the roads closest to them, a technique that was used by Alfonso VII of Castile in his attack against the Aragonese garrison of the castle of Castrojériz, in 1131.

Likewise, when the offensive objective was to conquer a walled city, the usual practice was to build a fortress in the surrounding area, preferably on the top of a hill, to use it as a refuge and centre of operations. This was very common in the great offensive campaigns directed by Alfonso I, as evidenced by the construction of Juslibol and Alfajarín in Zaragoza (1105–1118), Castilnuevo in Molina de Aragón (1128) or Hagón in the town of Fraga (1134). The ultimate objective of this type of operation, from the point of view of the besieging army, was to secure the surrender of the fortress authorities. This was, in fact, the outcome of the campaigns directed against the largest cities of the kingdoms of Zaragoza, Lerida and Valencia. An alternative solution was direct assault on the fortress, a more expeditious option, but also much more risky and expensive, since it required skilled labour and sophisticated material resources. According to the report by Ibn Idari, the army that surrounded Zaragoza in 1118 had several wooden towers, mounted on wheels, which the attackers used to approach the city walls. In addition, this author adds that the forces of Alfonso I had 20 *almajaneques* or *trabuquetes*, an artillery machine articulated on a great counterweight. In this regard, the *Cronica Adefonsi Imperatoris* indicates that Alfonso I used *ballistas* in the siege of Morón in 1128, and also in the assault of Bayonne, between 1130 and 1131. The *ballista* was another type of artillery machine, which worked on the principle of torsion, and was used to throw large arrows (Lema Pueyo 1997: 237–239).

Pitched battles

Direct confrontation on the open field was a well-known combat tactic and widely used among the powers that disputed the control of the territory in the southern side of the Pyrenees during the High Middle Ages. This does not mean, of course, that the feudal rulers, the taifa kings and the Almoravid and Almohad governors necessarily organized their military operations around the search for a pitched battle, but all of them knew the techniques of this form of combat and were ready, if needed, to put them into practice against their enemies. At this point, it is worth remembering, that the battle was a type of military operation associated with very high levels of cost and risk, which the

forces confronted in a conflict were not always able to bear. For this reason, we can say that any minimally organized army was prepared to carry out direct confrontation, if the occasion arose, although very few were organized exclusively with the aim of fighting a pitched battle.

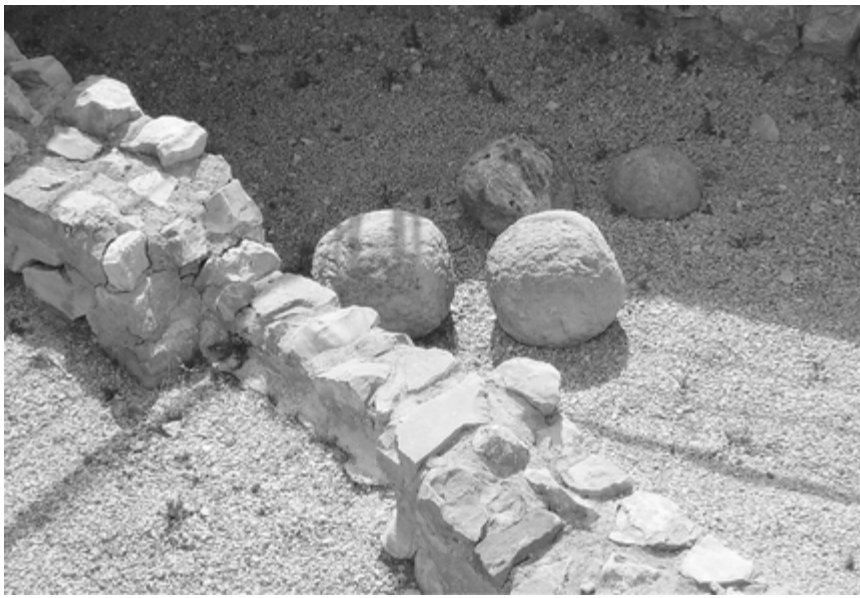

FIGURE 4.2 Projectiles found in the Castle of Albarracin (Aragon), 13th century. (Photography by Mario Lafuente Gómez)

The actions commanded by the counts Ramón Borrell of Barcelona and Ermengol I of Urgell in Albesa (1003), by the kings of Aragon Ramiro I in Graus (1063) and Pedro I in Huesca (1096), or by the count of Barcelona Ramon Berenguer III in Martorell (1114) are some of the most significant and early examples of the way of conceiving and carrying out a pitched battle. However, undoubtedly, the most intense stage in the execution of open field battles coincides with the conquest and colonization phase of the Ebro valley, and in this context the leading role was played by King Alfonso I of Aragon and Navarre, known since the late 12th century as 'The Battler'. Most of the battles commanded by this monarch, during his 30 years of reign, occurred during prowling or siege operations, according to the general model that we have previously pointed out (Lema Pueyo 1997: 257–261).

During the principality of Ramón Berenguer IV, already as sovereign of the kingdom of Aragon and the Catalan counties of Barcelona, Gerona, Osona and Cerdanya (1137–1162), the number of pitched battles declined. In fact, almost all the conquest and colonization of the Iberian System, on the Aragonese side, as well as the incorporation of the New Catalonia and the Ebro delta area, in

the Catalan region, took place without giving rise to any important pitched battles. This trend continued for the next two generations, although in this regard attention should be drawn to one important factor. Over time, pitched battles became more and more

FIGURE 4.3 Combat between two men-at-arms. Capital at the church of St Michael the Archangel (Biota, Aragon), 12th century. (Photography by Mario Lafuente Gómez)

sporadic, but at the same time their significance concerning the evolution of the political context, on the peninsular scale, was clearly on the rise. In Castile, the great battles of Alarcos (1195) and Navas de Tolosa (1212) – the latter with the participation of forces from all the Christian states of the Peninsula –

provide a good example of this phenomenon, while in the Crown of Aragon it is possible to emphasize the encounters in Portopí (1229) and Santa Maria del Puig (1239). These two battles were decisive for the projects to conquer the kingdoms of Majorca and Valencia, respectively, led by Jaime I (1213–1276).

Logistics and finance

From the High Middle Ages onwards, the financing of the war, with regard to the provision of a proper, cohesive and functional military infrastructure, was one of the main problems encountered by feudal powers, both in the Crown of Aragon and in the rest of the Peninsula. In fact, as pointed out by specialized historiography, the development of the financial structures of the European states from around year 1000 occurred in response to military needs. This was because wars, with their enormous capacity to use resources, induced important institutional and economic changes, particularly in taxation and credit, under the leadership of the agents of social power. These transformations, far from being considered as solutions of a strictly conjunctural type, tended to become consolidated and to establish an increasingly sophisticated financial system, not necessarily linked to warlike objectives.

The ways used to support the military deployment of feudal powers from the 11th century onwards were very heterogeneous, like the system of exaction itself. However, they can be organized into three major aspects, defined in both military and economic terms. Firstly, there was the financing of troops recruited for combat, whose wages were increasingly paid by obtaining services from the municipalities and, over the middle decades of the 14th century, from the Parliaments. Secondly, we must point out the investment destined to the management of the fortifications, covered by the progressive assignment of rents and ecclesiastical incomes. And, finally, the provision of naval armies for sea combat, an objective in which the contribution of private capital played a prominent role through, for example, the use of commercial vessels in the navies of the Crown.

Armament

The armament used in the Crown of Aragon during the High Middle Ages included a varied typology of weapons, armours and combat horses, which did not differ too much from the panorama documented in the rest of the

peninsular territories. In a rather general way, we can say that the choice of one or another type of weapon was subject to both material (resource availability) and strategic (combat conditions) factors, so that the different contingents mobilized could change considerably from one conflict to another. In this sense, it is also necessary to take into account that the social and political profile of individuals also conditioned their equipment when they were mobilized as combatants, since, as we have seen previously, all members of a particular social group necessarily had to meet certain military obligations, which often included the acquisition and conservation of a predetermined type of armour.

Thus, the first category of combatants within the armies of the Crown of Aragon was undoubtedly that formed by the cavalry, which, between the 11th and 13th centuries, we can identify mostly as men-at-arms. At this time, the most common armour was formed by a straight and double-edged sword, a circular or oval shield, a helmet or basinet – sometimes with a visor to protect the eyes – with a pendant mail, called *camal* or *almófar*, a long mail coat under a leather-reinforced surcoat, which sometimes could be reinforced with an arrangement of plates over the front of the body and back. To protect the legs, combatants firstly used chausses and, from the 13th century, they began wearing poleyns, gamboised cuisses, and greaves over the thighs, knees and legs, respectively, with scarves, metal sheets and spurs on the feet. In addition, since the 12th century, the men-at-arms' equipment included a series of elements associated with the horse: a platform composed of two stirrups, a chair with a rigid back and a double strap to attach it to the mount. Often, horses were covered in a trapper or caparison. Offensive weaponry could include a lance or even a set of these weapons, used first as stock or even as a throwing piece, and which became a collision resource during the 12th century. At the same time, the shields took the form of a kite or an almond, and their length was progressively increased.

On the other hand, the different types of foot combatants shared most of the elements that served to protect the body. The use of hand shields, however, was not a common element and was restricted to those soldiers in charge of direct combat, especially lancers. As far as offensive equipment is concerned, the most important instrument, was the crossbow. The importance of this weapon is attested by its constant evolution and perfection throughout the Middle Ages.

FIGURE 4.4 Tomb of a nobleman at the Old Cathedral of Lérida (Catalonia), 13th to 14th centuries. (Photography by Mario Lafuente Gómez)

Fortifications

In the High Middle Ages, military architecture underwent a remarkable progression, in step with the advances made in engineering and siege-warfare. Until well into the 9th century, the fortifications placed on the north-eastern territories of the Iberian Peninsula had a simple structure, wooden towers of a circular design, seated on rocky surfaces and located close to the main paths. Their dimensions were also modest, since they rarely exceeded 8 m in diameter and 5 m in height, enough to fulfil functions of surveillance and control of the territory. However, throughout the 10th century this type of construction underwent an important transformation, in line with the changes that were taking place in European architecture. In fact, at the time, the old wooden towers were built in stone, fixed by the use of lime mortar or plaster, and their structure evolved in a significant way, since the circular designs were replaced by square or rectangular designs (Ferrer i Mallol 2001: 123–131).

The 11th century witnessed the construction of the first castles, as a result of the development of the towers that had characterized the previous stage and their integration with the walled enclosures that protected them. Among the most representative examples of this change are the castles of Jordá, Mur and Áger, in the south of the counties of Pallars and Urgell, and the fortresses of Castellví, Cervelló and Montcada, which protected the most direct accesses to

the city of Barcelona. At the end of this century, and especially throughout the 12th century, castral architecture evolved into much larger structures, distributed around quadrangular plans surrounded by crenelated walls and reinforced with towers at each of the angles. Inside, it emphasized the presence of courtyards, cisterns and other spaces destined for logistical functions. Undoubtedly, the most representative cases of the evolution of castral architecture at this stage are found in the fortresses erected in the dominions of the military orders, from the middle of the 12th century onwards. The castles of Gardeny and Miravet, rebuilt by the order of the Temple in 1149 and 1153, respectively, are based on earlier constructions of Islamic origin.

From the 13th century onwards, the construction of castles began to incorporate small innovations that ended up becoming widespread during the Late Middle Ages. One of them was the use of slopes in the outside of the walls, to prevent or at least hinder the use of battering rams, and the excavation of galleries that could cause landslides. Additionally, some of the wooden structures, eventually incorporated on top of the walls, served as a model for the construction of machicolations (*matacanes*), murder holes (*buhederas*) and hoardings (*cadalsos*) on the main doors of the fortresses. In parallel, the construction of arrow-holes on the top of the walls was extended, due to the increasing importance of crossbowmen in the defence of all types of fortresses.

Naval warfare

From the High Middle Ages onwards, the location of the city and the county of Barcelona, on the western coast of the Mediterranean Sea, forced the powers installed in these lands to develop the necessary instruments to control the coast

FIGURE 4.5 Castle of Sant Oïsme (Catalonia), 11th century. (Photography by Mario Lafuente Gómez)

FIGURE 4.6 Castle of Aliaga (Aragon), belonging to the Order of the Hospital, 12th to 13th centuries. (Photography by Mario Lafuente Gómez)

and also ensure its own maritime projection. A good example of this was the existence of the *usatge* entitled *Omnes quippe naves*, which was written in the 12th century, according to which all the ships that were anchored between Creus cape and Salou were protected by the counts of Barcelona (Ladero Quesada 2010: 271). In practical terms, one of the earliest references to the leadership of a navy by a count of Barcelona was that from the mid-1110s, when Ramón Berenguer III led a fleet composed of Genoese, Pisan and Barcelona vessels in an expedition approved as a crusade by Pope Paschal II with the objective of conquering the island of Majorca. The operation took place in 1115 and reached its intended goal, although two years later the count of Barcelona had to give up his efforts due to the arrival of the Almoravids in the Iberian Peninsula. In effect, the North Africans recovered Majorca for Islam in 1117 (Ladero Quesada 2010: 429–430).

Furthermore, on the Aragonese side, prior to the dynastic union with Barcelona (1137), there were cases of military mobilization by sea. In particular, between 1130 and 1131, Alfonso I carried out a naval action against the port of Bayonne, in France, in order to prevent the supply of aid to the defenders of the place and thus provoke its capitulation. Shortly afterwards, in November 1132, this monarch ordered the construction of several ships and rafts with wood from the mountains of San Millán de la Cogolla, an important Cistercian monastery, the domain of which was located in the upper basin of the Ebro river. Vessels were given the task of providing logistical support to the troops gathered to besiege Mequinenza, a town that ended up falling into its power in 1133 (Lema Pueyo 1997: 253). The development of this operation gives

us an early example of the importance of fluvial navigation on the Ebro river, not only from the point of view of commercial development, but also in relation to the Mediterranean projection of the Crown of Aragon. Indeed, throughout the Middle Ages, a portion of the supplies for the development of the king's fleets were provided precisely by the inland territories and transported through the Ebro.

The naval development of the Crown of Aragon was promoted during the reign of Jaime I, the first consequence of which was the success of the offensive on the kingdom of Majorca in 1229. As was the case with the rest of the states of the western Mediterranean, with the sole exception of Venice, in the Crown of Aragon there was no permanent navy – that is to say, proper to the monarchy – but instead what we find is a heterogeneous conglomerate of agents involved in the process of the manufacture and mobilization of vessels. The key to the system lay precisely in the authority of monarchs to establish the requirements of ships built under their sovereignty and, above all, to demand their mobilization in the service of the Crown in the event of war.

Ideology of war

The social representations of the war in the Crown of Aragon, during the High and the Central Middle Ages, were part of a broad cultural framework, which included all the peninsular feudal states and was historically conditioned by two main factors. On the one hand, there was the need to legitimize and sustain the process of conquest and colonization of the territory under the authority of the Islamic powers, a long-term objective shared, more or less continuously, by all the powers that arose in the north of the Iberian Peninsula from the first half of the 9th century. In addition, there was strong competition within the dominant class, that is, of the secular and ecclesiastical aristocracy, when supplying itself with material and symbolic instruments which assured its social superiority. Both factors are historically linked. In fact, the process of annexing al-Andalus by the new feudal states generated many tensions between aristocratic factions and even between entities of different sovereignties that often had to be resolved by force. However, beyond this and independent of the social profiles of the contenders and the objective pursued by combat, war always retained its character of noble activity and those who were able to practise it lawfully – that is, according to the interests and strategies of the hegemonic power – could treasure honour and prestige, and so merit the recognition of their contemporaries.

From early on, both the Navarran-Aragonese and the Catalan lords

extended their conviction that the war against Islam was not only a just war, but also and above all, a blessed war encouraged by the divinity. A good example of this is the description of king Sancho Garcés I of Pamplona (905–925) included in the *Codex Vigilano* or *Albeldense* (10th century), which praises the king's work as a conqueror of lands against Islam, giving the king, in addition, a sacred character since it was said that he 'reigns with God in heaven' (Jimeno Aranguren and Monreal Zia 2008: 128–129). Subsequently, from the middle of the 11th century, the discourse used in the local statutes issued by monarchs in order to organize feudal colonization began to include explicit references to the need to reduce Islam and to consequently benefit Christianity. An example of this is found in the law of Alquézar (1069), a region in the north of the kingdom of Aragon. This document, promulgated by the monarch Sancho Ramírez, indicates explicitly that the new fortress had been built 'for the example of Christians and to harm the Saracens'.

However, undoubtedly, the definitive endorsement of the war against Islam as a war not only blessed by the divinity and therefore just, but also as a holy war itself, came in 1064, when the pope summoned Christendom to participate in the campaign for the conquest of Barbastro (Laliena Corbera 2009). From that moment, almost all the great expeditions of conquest headed by the kings of Aragon and Navarre, initially, and by the sovereigns of the Crown of Aragon, later, received a bull of the crusade. Some examples are the offensives against Zaragoza (1118), Tortosa (1148) and Majorca (1229). The introduction of the crusading spirit in the peninsular north-east bore a close relationship with the introduction of the *Reconquista* discourse in Castile, understood as a metanarrative identity sustained by the Church and the aristocratic elites and aimed at legitimizing the conquest and colonization of al-Andalus. At the heart of this discourse was the assurance that in the past all lands governed by Muslims had belonged to only one Christian kingdom, the Visigoth kingdom of Toledo, dishonestly destroyed during the Islamic invasion. From this point of view, the war against the Andalusian powers came to be conceived by the Christians as the restoration of the sovereignty that in the past had been exercised by the Visigoth monarchs.

From the first half of the 12th century, this ideological framework, known as the *Reconquista*, permeated the mentality of the aristocracy of Navarre, Aragon and the Catalan counties, as we can see, among other sources, in the law issued by Ramiro II de Aragón (1134–1137) to the Aragonese village of Benabarre (1137). In it, the monarch granted a series of privileges to the settlers of the place and, addressing them, affirmed he did so because 'you have won the castle of Benabarre and you have unchained it from the pagans, returning it to the Christians' (Baiges, Feliú and Salrach 2010: 1.188–1.189). Later, in the preface to *Fuero General de Navarra* (1238), the conquest of the Iberian

Peninsula by the Muslims was explicitly interpreted as a genuine 'loss of Spain' and, at the same time, the forms of resistance that some Christians demonstrated in the north of the Peninsula was stressed (Utrilla 2003).

Main campaigns

Crusade of Barbastro (1064)

The campaign directed against the Islamic town of Barbastro carried out by the Aragonese monarch Sancho Ramirez in 1064 is the first great event of war involving the territorial expansion of the kingdom of Aragon. The importance of this expedition, however, did not lie in its material effects, since the conquest of the city did not have as a consequence its annexation to Aragonese dominions and, in fact, the king al-Muqtadir of Zaragoza managed to recover it by force a year later. The importance of the conquest of Barbastro lay in its enormous cultural impact both within the Aragonese aristocracy and, in general, within the whole of the European Christian community. This was because, on the eve of the Campaign, the papacy encouraged collaboration with the Aragonese monarch by granting indulgences to future combatants, decisively contributing to the spread of the ideal of holy war and, above all, to the strengthening of the ideology of the crusade, which would become the great reference for the war against Islam from the Council of Clermont in 1095 onwards (Laliena Corbera 2009).

The conquest of Zaragoza by Alfonso I (1118)

The conquest of Zaragoza had become one of the great objectives of the kings of Aragon since the end of the 11th century. In order to carry it out, the Aragonese monarchs developed a strategy of indirect approximation, oriented towards the control of the territory that surrounded the city and, above all, of the communication routes that connected the city with other towns located on the left bank of the Ebro river, with the aim of isolating the city from the north and securing the back of the feudal army.

The first important step in this direction was taken by Sancho Ramirez (1063– 1094), who, in 1091, ordered the construction of the fortress of El Castellar, located on the left side of the Ebro river, 20 kilometres from the city. Ten years later, in 1101, his son and successor, Pedro I (1094–1104), ordered a

second fortress of similar characteristics and function to be built, only 5 kilometres from the city. This was the castle later known as Juslibol, the etymology of which evokes the war cry of the Crusaders who were involved in the final offensive: *Deus lo vol*. Afterwards, in 1105, the last of the towns that remained under the control of the Islamic kingdom, Ejea, surrendered, taking also into account the siege of the army of Alfonso I (1104–1134), which was the first great military action of his reign. Thereafter, the siege of the city could begin to be planned, but the expansion of the Almoravids in the Iberian Peninsula forced the suspension of the offensive. Indeed, although late, the city of Zaragoza also succumbed to the power of North Africans in 1110. The military force of the new lords of Zaragoza, widely verified through recent experiences, such as the Battle of Uclés (1108), persuaded Alfonso I to reconsider his strategy in depth during the following years.

The final solution came almost a decade later, when Alfonso I managed to gather a large army under his authority in which members of the Aragonese, Navarre, Catalan and ultra-Pyrenean aristocracy were integrated, with the purpose of definitively taking the great capital of the Ebro valley. The first actions aimed at the conquest consisted of the destruction of the agricultural environment of the city, by means of cavalry raids, in order to considerably reduce the resistance capacity of the defenders. The offensive received its definitive impulse with the celebration of the Council of Toulouse at the beginning of 1118, when it was granted a bull of the crusade for the expedition. This fact definitely moved the aristocracy to fight in a holy war, so that, in May of that same year, the troops of Alfonso I began to settle in front of the city to initiate the siege. The end of the siege came on 18 December 1118, when the Almoravid governor surrendered and transferred the domain over the city to Alfonso I (Ladero Quesada 2010: 198–201).

FIGURE 4.7 Walls of Zaragoza (Aragon), close to the Convent of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, 1st to 14th centuries. (Photography by Mario Lafuente Gómez)

The Battle of Muret (1213)

On 12 September 1213, the most important battle of the Albigensian Crusade took place close to the town of Muret (Occitania). This battle was fought, on the one hand, by the armies of Philip II of France and Simon of Montfort, and, on the other, by the forces of Pedro II of Aragon (1194–1213) and his ultra-Pyrenean vassals Raymond VI of Toulouse, Bernardo IV of Cominges and Raymond Roger of Foix. The confrontation ended with the victory of the crusaders, who also murdered king Pedro II and captured prince Jaime, who was his heir and the future king Jaime I. As a result, Simon de Montfort held the prince as a captive of war for one year. Thereafter, Pope Innocent III ordered him to release the prince to the knights of the Order of the Temple, who transferred him to the castle held by the order in Monzón (kingdom of Aragon). The end of the battle also meant the end of the hegemony of the Crown of Aragon over Occitania, although, Jaime I retained the lordship of Montpellier for a generation, which he had inherited from his mother (Alvira Cabrer 2008).

The conquest of Majorca by Jaime I (1229)

The assault on the island of Majorca constituted the first great military expedition commanded and headed by king Jaime I. The action was considered as a crusade by virtue of a bull issued by Pope Gregory IX in February 1229, according to which a series of indulgences were granted to all those who engaged in the expedition or collaborated in some way to achieve the objectives of the campaign. In addition, the conquest of Majorca was characterized by inciting the wishes of an important sector of the Aragonese and Catalan aristocracy, around the authority of a still young monarch, after the uncertain and conflictive first years of his reign. From a strategic point of view, the offensive took place in a single and powerful military operation, organized into two consecutive actions: first, the landing of the Catalan and Aragonese troops at Santa Ponsa (12 September 1229) and one day later, a confrontation pitched in the Sierra known then as Portopí (currently Sierra de Na Burguesa). According to the chronicles of Bernat Desclot and Jerónimo Zurita, king Jaime I himself played a prominent role in the second of these two actions, since he personally led the troops under his command.

The conquest of Valencia by Jaime I (1238–1274)

The city of Valencia had been one of the most important cities of al-Andalus since at least the 11th century. At the beginning of the 13th century, it became one of the strongest fortresses of the Almohad empire in the Iberian Peninsula. On the eve of the arrival of the feudal army, the defence of the city was based on a network of between 40 and 50 fortifications spread out along the Turia river basin. In addition, numerous contingents of experienced combatants, and especially crossbowmen, had concentrated within their walls, to form a total of approximately 5,000 to 6,000 soldiers. In these conditions, the strategy deployed by Jaime I consisted of seeking the destruction of the network of castles that protected the city. This strategy was carried out in three different stages: the first took place during the year 1233 and ended in the conquest of Burriana, which enabled the virtual capture of the whole area between the Ebro valley and that town; the second phase took place during the spring of 1237 when the conquest of the castle of Puig de Cebolla (10 kilometres from the capital) took place, which immediately became the new centre of operations for the feudal army; finally, Jaime I started the siege of Valencia in April of 1238 and on 9 October of that same year he triumphantly entered the city (Ladero Quesada 2010: 208–210).

The first Union (1283–1301)

The first war of the Union was a conflict which began to develop in the kingdom of Aragon in 1283, in which a league of barons and cities confronted the monarch and his closest aristocratic elite. The trigger for the conflict was the despotic attitude of Pedro in disposing of the material and human resources of the kingdom, in the context of his expedition involving the conquest of Sicily (1282). Nevertheless, the most profound causes were the increase in fiscal pressure on certain towns, villages and rural communities, and the polarization of the aristocracy into two sides, during the last years of the reign of Jaime I. It is also important to state that this was when the conquest and incorporation of the lordship of Albarracin within the kingdom of Aragon (1284) took place.

II Late Middle Ages

Peninsular and Mediterranean conflicts (14th to 15th centuries)

Political outline

The political history of the Crown of Aragon in the Late Middle Ages was defined by the configuration of a constitutionalist system of government, based on the exercise of power in a shared way between the king and the hegemonic groups of society, which, organized through an effective parliamentary system, acted decisively on all those matters that affected society as a whole. Although the parliamentary tradition started in Aragon and Catalonia during the 12th century, it was not until the middle of the 14th century that the *Cortes* (see Glossary) of each state reached a more advanced level of development and, therefore, obtained greater authority and more power. In fact, between the 1350s and 1360s, the Aragonese, Catalan and Valencian Parliaments were organized to give rise to the *Diputaciones del General* (see Glossary). These three institutions were initially intended to manage the product of the exceptional taxation approved at each assembly but, over time, they started having increased responsibilities. From the cultural point of view, this process was strongly influenced by the spread in the West of political principles taken

from Roman law, which social agents gradually adapted according to their own interests.

All this institutional change was related to the numerous conflicts permeating society at all levels, and in particular, the numerous wars that in one way or another involved the Aragonese monarchy and the kingdoms of the Crown. In fact, as many authors have stated, relations between the military sphere and the other areas of power were very close during the Late Middle Ages. Therefore, measures adopted in the context of a warlike conflict ended up consolidating themselves and giving rise to permanent institutions. It is certainly in the field of taxation where we can find more examples in this sense, since the financial needs of armies from 1300 onwards constituted a decisive factor in the transformation of the fiscal structures of European states. At the same time, they were an essential principle when attributing a social identity, as people became identified, among other qualities, by their level of wealth and, therefore, by their capacity to pay taxes. However, it should not be forgotten that the military sphere also influenced other planes of reality, perhaps less obvious but not less important within general historical development. In this sense, the creation of collective identities through the dissemination of political concepts such as the common good, native land (*tierra*) or nature (*naturaleza*, a status linked to a given settlement), all aimed at making society cohesive according to the interests of the monarchy and the ruling class.

In the case of the Crown of Aragon, the end of the territorial expansion against Islam in the Iberian Peninsula was confirmed in 1304. This was when the territorial borders with the Crown of Castile were definitively delimited and the opportunities to continue the colonization process undertaken in the previous stage definitively ended. From then on, the political and military power of the monarchy, supported by the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, took shape in three different areas, although the strategies followed and the resources employed in each of them were not very different. The first one lay in the western Mediterranean, where the Crown of Aragon sovereigns began claiming important sovereignty quotas at the end of the 13th century, facing off against other European powers, including the kingdom of France and the republic of Genoa. The arguments used to justify intervention in this area consisted mainly of vindicating the dynastic rights of the royal household or the need to safeguard the commercial interests of the Catalan, Valencian and Majorcan bourgeoisie. However, behind these campaigns was also the interest of the feudal aristocracy in reproducing its hegemonic position by military service to the king, as shown by the high level of involvement of the peninsular nobility in successive campaigns carried out until the end of the 15th century. This was the motivation that drove the great operations against

Sicily, Sardinia and Naples, and which began in 1282, with the intervention of Pedro III in Palermo during the conflict known as the Sicilian Vespers.

The second of these areas was located in the Iberian Peninsula and was the result of the relations established with the rest of the Spanish kingdoms, and especially with the Crown of Castile. The dynastic links between the two monarchies and, above all, the many connections that united the aristocracy of the two Crowns gave rise to numerous contexts involving conflict during the Late Middle Ages, which were often translated into violent wars. The most significant of these, due to their social and economic consequences, occurred between 1296 and 1304, because of the Aragonese involvement in the Castilian dynastic crisis that followed the death of Alfonso X; between 1356 and 1375, in the difficult sequence that linked the war of the Two Pedros with the Castilian civil war and the subsequent confrontations between Pedro IV of Aragon (1336–1387) and Henry II of Castile (1369–1379); and, in the 15th century, intermittently throughout the reign of Alfonso V (1416–1458). In most of these contexts, the Crown of Aragon viewed the confrontations with Castile like defensive wars, in which they fought to defend the integrity of its territory.

Finally, the third of the areas mentioned above corresponds to internal conflicts and civil wars, although in this particular case, the history of the Crown of Aragon does not offer too many examples. It is significant that, unlike what happened in Castile, the rupture of the consensus within the ruling class in the Aragonese Crown always ended with the victory of the royalist side. This is what happened in the two great civil wars that lasted in the territories of the Crown during the Late Middle Ages. The first of these was the second Union war (1347–1348), which was initiated following the uprising of an important sector of the nobility and the cities of Aragon and Valencia, against the authoritarian politics and the enormous fiscal pressure carried out by the monarchy from the decade of 1320 onwards. The second of the civil wars mentioned was the Catalan civil conflict (1462–1472), where the political society of the principality, organized around the Catalonian *Diputación* and the *Consell* (council) of Barcelona, was against Juan II, who had the support of important sectors of the urban popular classes and the serf peasantry.

Recruitment system and composition of the armies

Military obligations and recruitment methods

According to the documentation of the royal chancery, money fiefs were still

used as a mechanism for military mobilization in conflicts of a defensive character, at least until 1356, coinciding with the beginning of the war of the Two Pedros (1356–1366). However, in the case of the offensive expeditions, and particularly regarding Mediterranean conflicts, this system had begun to lose effectiveness long before, specifically in the first decade of the 14th century, in the context of the campaign against the city of Almería in 1309. As a consequence, the monarchs were increasingly moving from owners of fiefs, to rely on the knights of the royal household (Lafuente Gómez 2016: 180–187).

As regards the urban oligarchies, located either within the realm of the domain or in the lordships of the secular or ecclesiastical aristocracy, there was a broad renewal of the statutes related to military obligations during the Late Middle Ages. Although, as we have seen earlier, local charters promulgated from the second half of the 12th century, mainly in the Ebro valley and the Iberian Cordillera, included the obligation of members of the local oligarchy to own a horse and certain armour and weapons, from the first decades of the 14th century on, these types of rules were also applied by the other towns and cities of the Crown (Lafuente Gómez 2014: 37–43).

Furthermore, those subjects who were neither members of the aristocratic circle nor shared the privileges of the urban oligarchies continued to be submitted during the Late Middle Ages to the host service, which, as we have seen, involved the payment of an economic amount previously set by the municipal authorities and the representatives of the royal or seigneurial power.

As in the High Middle Ages, the systems used by the king to mobilize his subjects and vassals during the 14th and 15th centuries depended directly on legal status and social profile. As for the feudal aristocracy, the loss of the military functionality of the traditional feudal-vassalage contract – a phenomenon to which we referred in the previous section – had at least two direct consequences on the process of convening and recruiting noble companies. The first of these was related to the legal framework in which the summons was included, since, as we have seen previously, during the first decades of the 14th century the king's household became the main instrument used by the monarchy to mobilize the noble companies (Sáiz Serrano 2009: 103–106). The second consequence, closely linked to the previous one, was the recognition by the king of the obligation to pay the entirety of the military service of his vassals, regardless of their status, the category of benefits they enjoyed or their link to the domestic environment of the monarchy. This change, which had taken place since the end of the 13th century, was confirmed at the beginning of the war of the Two Pedros, when the summons issued from the royal chancellery began to explicitly notify that all those individuals who came at the king's request would receive, in return, a remuneration equivalent to the total service rendered, from the day they left

their homes until the day they returned (Ferrer i Mallol 2001: 156–162; Lafuente Gómez 2016: 186).

The most significant examples of the military mobilization practice based on the king's household were found in the context of the great campaigns in the Mediterranean, specifically the two wars declared on Sardinia in 1323 and 1354, in order to conquer the island, in the first case, and to consolidate the monarch's authority over it, in the second. Thus, for example, in the second of these campaigns, which was directed personally by Pedro IV, the responsibility for supervising the recruiting of the noble companies fell to the king's steward, Pedro Jordán de Urriés. This official's job consisted of personally interviewing a total of 27 members of the elite nobility to negotiate the specific conditions of their incorporation to the armada with them and, in particular, to agree on the number of men-at-arms that each of them was prepared to mobilize. Once this step had been taken, the royal chancellery proceeded to send the necessary credentials to place the commitments made on record. One significant example of the operation of the system was provided by the *caballero* Miguel Pérez Zapata, who received 40 of these credentials, thus being empowered to mobilize a total of 40 men-at-arms (Lafuente Gómez 2011: 115–122).

On the other hand, the system used to recruit the foot soldiers and the crew of the ships – especially the rowers – began with a public call for volunteers, through the establishment of recruitment points (*taules d'acordament*), such as the one installed in Zaragoza in early 1355. A *taula d'acordament* was an office located in a public space and run by one or two notaries, in charge of registering all those volunteers who came in with the purpose of joining. To call attention and, in this way, attract more people, the *taulas* used to be supported by bands of musicians or actors, dedicated to making theatrical performances and continuously advertising this recruitment. Only if the predetermined quotas of combatants were not met did the monarchy proceed to force recruitment.

Composition of the armies

Personal guards of monarchs

From the first half of the 14th century, the increasing military functionality of the king's household contributed to the consolidation of the monarch's personal guard by promulgating ordinances specifically designed to regulate the organization of such forces. Among all the sovereigns of the Crown of

Aragon, it was undoubtedly Pedro IV 'the Ceremonious' who more decisively favoured this institution, through the promulgation of four ordinations on the cavalry troops of the king's household, in 1356, 1368, 1377 and 1383. To this type of norm, it would be possible to add the instructions on how to recruit and organize the companies of combatants, issued in 1365, 1369 and 1386 (Ladero Quesada 2010: 257; Ferrer i Mallol 2001: 186–187). Among the most significant changes in this legislation, it is worth mentioning the substitution in 1369 of the position of *senescal* by the figure of the *condestable*, through French influence: *connétable* (Ladero Quesada 2010: 231–230).

FIGURE 4.8 Knight St George killing the dragon. Chapitel at the cloister of the Convent of St Maria of Montesión (Barcelona), 15th century. (Photography by Mario Lafuente Gómez)

Furthermore, the royal will to have a cavalry force strongly united under its authority, was also reflected in the foundation of orders of chivalry, from the central decades of the 14th century. The first and perhaps the most important of these was the order of Saint George, originally founded by Pedro II in 1201, and which did not attain major significance until 1353, when Pedro IV decided to renew it and integrate into it a select group of Aragonese, Valencian and, above all, Catalan knights. As we can read in several of the military summonses issued by the king, in the context of the war of the Two Pedros, specifically in 1359, 1361 and 1363, at that time 147 knights, 57 squires and 3 boys under 14 years were part of the order (Ferrer i Mallol 2001: 186–187). Some decades later, in 1392, Martín I founded the Company of the Strap

(*Empresa de la Corretja*). In this case the aim was to assemble a select circle of knights from the whole of the Crown of Aragon, whom they could count on for the expedition the king was preparing to lead in the kingdom of Sicily, to restore to the throne prince Martín the Younger and princess Mary.

Noble militias

From the first decades of the 14th century the transformations regarding the system of military mobilization employed by the monarchy also generally affected the whole secular aristocracy of the Crown of Aragon. In fact, the progressive displacement of the feudal-vassalage contract and its replacement by the household, within the systems of military organization, was a phenomenon widely observed among the high and middle nobility. The militia recruited by Alfonso the Younger, duke of Gandía, in 1413, provided a significant example of this. The aim was to help the monarch Fernando I repress the rebellion of Jaime de Urgell. This was a company of 295 horsemen, grouped into 111 small companies. If we analyse the social profiles of the captains of these 111 companies, we can see that most of them (73) had a personal relationship with the duke, since they were either part of his household or his court. We also know that some worked for remunerated jobs (the head chamberlain, the treasurer and the legal representative), although most of them did not have a specific role, according to the available documentation. The rest of the captains (38) were not directly related to the duke or to his immediate entourage, indicating that their integration into the army could be due to practical reasons, since Alfonso was, at that moment, one of the leaders of the royal army. In both cases, we can find individuals of the local nobility as well as members with a non-noble status (Sáiz Serrano 2008: 142–149).

FIGURE 4.9 Tomb of husband and wife, belonging to the lineages Montagut and Ça Terra, respectively. Cathedral of Tarragona, 13th to 14th centuries. (Photography by Mario Lafuente Gómez)

Likewise, the militias recruited from the middle levels of the aristocracy also followed the guidelines described above, although they did so on a much smaller scale. In this sense, we should note that the maximum size of the companies recruited in this social group rarely exceeded ten horsemen and that the numbers thus recruited usually came from three different social spheres: family, domestic staff (usually called 'squires of home') and friends (related individuals, sometimes associated with the same side or faction). A concrete example of the weight of the military function in the domestic environment of the middle nobility is provided by the will of Jimeno López de Embún, written in 1363. At that time, the home environment of this Aragonese squire included ten people: four squires, four relatives, a young boy and a young girl.

Urban militias

To consider the utility of the municipal militias in the Crown of Aragon during the Late Middle Ages, it is important to distinguish between two clearly differentiated contexts: the wars led by the monarchy and those internal conflicts that in some way affected the urban societies themselves. In the first case, the military function of urban societies began to decrease around 1300 and, in fact, only retained a certain effectiveness in defensive wars. As a consequence of this process, the custom to reply to the summons of the king

through the payment of an economic contribution to redeem the military service became established. Nevertheless, the quantity and the forms of paying that contribution had to be previously negotiated between the king and the municipalities.

On the contrary, in the conflicts developed at the internal level, where villages, towns and village communities were involved, all these organizations always had in mind the possibility of recruiting companies from their own neighbours and, in fact, in a few cases it has been demonstrated that mobilization was carefully carried out. This type of organization was embodied in legal formulas or particular institutions, including the *somaten*, a legal instrument used in Catalonia, that began to function as such at the beginning of the 14th century and which allowed councils to denounce and persecute fugitive criminals or declared enemies of the city itself. The summoning of the *somaten* was to be issued by the local authorities and the companies recruited under such circumstances had to be placed under the municipal standard. The alleged motives generally concerned disputes over the use of certain natural resources or, simply, problems arising from the exercise of justice. Often, these municipal militias could grow and link themselves to other municipalities. This was the case, for instance, with the *sagramental*, a host directed by the authorities of Barcelona from the late 13th century.

However, regardless of the context, there were three cities that maintained their military functions throughout the Middle Ages. They were the most important cities of the peninsular territories of the Crown, that is, Zaragoza, Barcelona and Valencia. Beyond the symbolic component that justified their existence and encouraged their active participation in civic ceremonies, the militias of the three largest cities of the Crown also became directly involved in the great late medieval conflicts, either in response to instructions received from the royal chancellery or on their own initiative, in some of the internal confrontations that took place in the 14th and 15th centuries. The three most well-known contexts in this sense are the mobilization of cavalry by the council of Zaragoza in the war of Two Pedros (Lafuente Gómez 2014: 71–73); the recruitment of foot soldiers by the city of Barcelona in response to the invasion of the count of Armagnac in 1389–1390 (Marsá 1977); and, finally, the mobilization of the militia of Valencia in a private conflict, such as the war between the city and Carroça de Vilaragut, lady of Corbera, in 1390 (Narbona Vizcaíno 2006).

Military order troops

During the Late Middle Ages, the potential of the military orders installed in the Crown of Aragon declined significantly compared to the previous period. The fundamental reason that explains this fact is the growth of the distance to the border with Peninsular Islam and the disappearance, therefore, of the geopolitical scenario that had led to the foundation and development of communities of friars from the 12th century. But to this factor, it is necessary to add the strategy carried out by the monarchy, especially since the reign of Pedro IV (1336–1387), to more or less directly control the government of the *encomiendas* located in the territories linked to its sovereignty. As a result of royal intervention, the seigneurial domains belonging to the military orders were successively managed by governors – so-called *comendadores* (see Glossary) – recruited from among the men of the aristocracy closest to the monarch, who in turn had their own feudal networks. In this way, the old figure of the friars, as warriors loyal to their order and their rule, gradually tended to disappear.

The transformations in the military sense and effectiveness of the military orders in this period can be observed with more exactitude when analysing the role of the *comendadores* and the hosts of Montalbán during the war of the Two Pedros. As we saw in the first part of this chapter, Montalbán had, since 1212, been the seat of the greater command of the order of Santiago in the Crown of Aragon and, therefore, its *comendadores* were regularly summoned by different monarchs to participate in numerous offensive and defensive campaigns. Maintaining this dynamic, from the summer of 1356, Pedro IV regularly ordered the mobilization of troops on the part of the order's lordship and he did it following two different but compatible systems. On the one hand, he summoned the company of men-at-arms linked to the order, who were under the authority of the *comendador* and, on the other hand, he issued several calls to the council of Montalbán so that the municipal authorities recruited, among the villagers of the town and its villages, one or more companies of fighters on foot. The analysis of the composition of these companies shows that, at the time, the number of friars mobilized was already practically insignificant, resulting in the decline of their patterns of life. The information available regarding the rest of the troops recruited by the military orders is not, in fact, very different, since friars were clearly a minority.

Castle garrisons and tenancies

In the Late Middle Ages, the regime of tenure and management of the fortifications did not change with respect to the institutional structure shaped

during the 12th and 13th centuries. However, the existence of a greater catalogue of sources than in the previous period has allowed researchers to delve much more into this question and even, in certain contexts, to carry out quantitative analyses on the costs of maintaining castles and their respective equipment.

Therefore, within the royal dominion, the establishment of an *alcaide* (governor) in a fortress was the king's decision, who could also take into account the opinion of members of his council or even delegate the decision to third parties. Once the king made a decision in this sense, the royal chancellery sent a letter to the candidate, notifying him of the appointment, the tenure regime (*Costumbre de España* or *Por casa plana*) and the duration of the position. In addition, the summons also reported the amount of the *retenencia*, the income to be paid and the officials who should pay it. In this sense, it should be emphasized that, at least from the mid-14th century, and more specifically during the continued conflicts against the Crown of Castile, there was a significant increase in the amount paid as *retenencia*. We should also note that, in order to confirm the appointment of an *alcaide*, the person selected had to make a personal homage to the king.

In the case of noble jurisdiction, the appointment of *alcaides* was the exclusive competence of the lord and, as such, it was one of the faculties that appears most frequently in the letters of proxy to take possession of a manor. In May 1363, for example, Juan Martínez de Luna ordered Esteban de Marcuello, a neighbour of Zaragoza, to be appointed procurator to receive on his behalf the possession of the town and boundaries of Tauste, together with any other place or castle of those which the king had recently granted him, and to appoint the necessary officers, among them the *alcaides*, and to transfer control of the castle to them. Similarly, Miguel Sánchez de Ahuero, as the legal representative of the county of Luna, received some castles in homage on behalf of the countess, María de Luna. We know of some of them because they were collected in 1363 by Sancho Martínez de la Peyra, a notary from Zaragoza, like the one of Lope de Rueda in Zaragoza, involving the castle of Huesa, by the 'Custom of Spain and according to the Law of Aragon'.

Chains of command

The organization of chains of command in the Late Middle Ages reproduced the general principle of the previous period, according to which the authority shared over the different bodies of combatants was directly related to the military potential of the different powers gathered on each occasion. Due to

this, the holders of more powerful lordships and/or fiefs occupied a higher position in the leadership of the armies. However, the process of centralization of political power around the monarchy and the consequent strengthening of state institutions led, after 1300, to the emergence of positions and offices with large military faculties authorized to control the troops mobilized by aristocracy and municipalities.

These responsibilities fell into two distinct areas in terms of their legal framework, but were very closely related to each other from a social point of view, since they were often carried out by men from the same social networks. The first of them was the king's household, which included the positions of *senescal*, already existing in the previous period. From 1330, this position belonged to the counts of Prades, through the concession of Alfonso IV, but in 1369, Pedro IV decided to buy the rights for this and to give it to the prince Martín, future Martín I the Humane (1396–1410). That same year, the monarch created the office of *condestable*, following the example of the organization of the French king's household. Under the two previous figures, from 1344 there had also been two sheriffs and eight ushers of arms; and later, a marshal, a position held by Guerau de Queralt in 1389 (Ferrer i Mallol 2001: 188–189; Sáiz Serrano 2008: 76–84).

The second area includes the institutions of each of the territories, the holders of which generally acted in harmony with the military posts belonging to the king's household. The first of the positions of power with specific competences in the military area in the Crown of Aragon was the general lieutenancy of the monarch, also called, in time of war, *capitanía general* (general captain). This position involved the temporary delegation of all the powers and functions of the sovereign to a loyal person, usually a member of the royal family or of the highest aristocracy. Together with the general lieutenancy, there was also the general governance, a function symbolically linked to the throne's heir from 1350 and played by a knight in each of the territories of the Crown. Unlike the lieutenancy of the king, general governance was a permanent position.

A level below the lieutenancy and the general governor there were the territorial captaincies, positions of a temporary character that granted their holders broad powers over the population and companies located in a specific area of the territory, always within royal jurisdiction. The position of *alcaide* was closely related to that of captain. *Alcaides* were responsible for defending a castle and its borders. Under the authority of captains and *alcaides*, there were the sergeants (*cabos*), which can be defined as the most elementary position among the commanders of the army. Each of them was in charge of a small contingent of combatants, either on horseback or on foot (Lafuente Gómez 2014: 95–140).

Military operations

Cavalry raids

In 1300, the change of the geopolitical situation, as a consequence of the distance of the direct border with Islam and the multiplication of confrontations with other powers of Christendom, both within the Iberian Peninsula and in the Mediterranean area, did not mean the end of cavalry raids as a military strategy, but did carry some modifications in terms of its development and, above all, of the management of their results.

In this sense, if we take into account the growing power of the Parliaments and *Diputaciones del General* in all matters concerning the organization and financing of the armies of the Crown of Aragon, from the first half of the 14th century, it is not strange that the deputies would end up obtaining from the king the granting of the right to collect and administer the so-called *Royal fifth*, that is, the part of the booty which belonged to the king (20 per cent). Thus, in all land or naval campaigns financed by the *Cortes*, without the participation of the monarch, the management of rights obtained as the *Royal fifth* also had to be in the hands of certain officers chosen by the Parliaments. This measure was applied in Catalonia at least from 1359 (Parliament of Cervera), while in Aragon its introduction happened later, since it was not raised until the General Parliament of Monzon of 1362–1363.

However, the transfer of the right of collection and administration of the *Royal fifth* to the officers appointed by the Parliaments continued to be a strictly circumstantial solution. This can be seen, for example, in the context of the new conflicts with Castile during the reign of Alfonso V, in which the *Royal fifth* was again managed by the king's officers. Moreover, as had happened in the course of previous conflicts, in April 1430 the monarch transferred to all the local bailiffs of the kingdom of Valencia the order to determine the right of the *Royal fifth* for the fortification works of the castles bordering Castile. Furthermore, in that same year, the fifth of the booty obtained by Ramon Boïl (head chamberlain of the king), Antoni de Vilaragut (baron) and Joan Tolsà (knight) in the Castilian town of Iniesta, went to finance part of the works carried out on the castles of Segorbe and Benaguasil.

Siege warfare

The advances in military architecture that took place during the 13th century

decisively influenced the way of considering and carrying out the besieging of fortresses and towns. In comparison with their immediate precedents, late medieval fortifications were much more solid and complex constructions, and also incorporated different architectural solutions that could be used as platforms of attack. Thus, from the first half of the 14th century, the siege operations carried out under the influence of the Crown of Aragon were much more localized than their High Middle Ages precedents and tended to concentrate on strongholds of special importance. In addition, unlike that which had happened previously, in this period it was not usual to build castles close to the besieged fortresses. The main reason to explain this strategic change was the growing effectiveness of artillery, mines and, above all, firearms. They were the most used tactics in the siege operations that took place in the territories of the Crown of Aragon (Ferrer i Mallol 2001: 190–191).

The siege strategies used in each of these contexts have been summarized by Francesc de Eiximenis in his work *Lo Crestià*, specifically in the first volume of his book entitled *Lo dotzè* (1385–1392). In this volume, the Franciscan author devoted more than a hundred chapters to explaining four forms of combat that, according to the criteria of that period, could take place in the context of any armed conflict. The first of them was the pitched battle; the second, the siege; the third, the judicial duel; and the last, the naval combat. If we focus on the second, we can see that the general guidelines of the siege war broadly reproduced those applied in the High Middle Ages, with several technical innovations. Thus, Eiximenis (*Lo dotzè del Crestià*: vol. I, chaps CCXCI–CCCXX) distinguished two principal ways of besieging a fortress: one which did not involve the direct use of violence and which consisted of isolating the place until it surrendered because of hunger and thirst, and that which required the direct use of force. In describing the two forms, the author particularly highlighted the need to know the enemy's resources and the use of strategies involving pressure and psychological warfare, which could undermine the spirit of the besieged people and make them surrender.

On the other hand, the analysis of some of the siege operations carried out throughout the Late Middle Ages shows a significant turning point in the third quarter of the 14th century, when there was more widespread use of gunpowder and firearms. Until then, siege operations had largely reproduced the patterns developed during the 13th century, as we can see, for example, in the sieges of Calatayud (1362), Teruel (1363), Tarazona (1363), Murviedro (1364) and Valencia (1365), during the war of the Two Pedros against the Crown of Castile. However, at the end of the 14th century, fire artillery had substantially changed warfare, as can be seen in the analysis of the measures taken to defend the north of Catalonia and Aragon before the invasion of the Count of Armagnac in 1389, or, several decades later, in the siege operations against

Naples, first by Alfonso V (1437–1442) and later by Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba (1495–1507).

Pitched battles

As was pointed out in the first part of this chapter, from the 13th century on, the frequency with which the armies of the Crown of Aragon made the decision to resolve a conflict in a battlefield decreased. In fact, pitched battles were much less frequent in the Late Middle Ages, especially in the Iberian Peninsula, despite the seriousness of the clashes that took place within this scenario, mostly during the third quarter of the 14th century. We can use as examples the Battle of Epila, where the army of Pedro 'the Ceremonious' fought against the troops of the Aragonese rebels raised in the second Union (1348); the battles of Araviana (1359) and Nájera (1360), which occurred during the war of the Two Pedros; that also fought in Nájera some years later (1367), already in the Castilian civil war; that at Cudolar (1412), where the supporters of Jaime de Urgell confronted those of Fernando de Antequera in the kingdom of Valencia; and that of Calaf (1465) in the Catalonian civil war. Despite that, this type of fighting was much more common in the Mediterranean, because the high costs of maintaining the Crown armies forced the conclusion of conflicts in a short period of time. The most important actions, in this context, occurred in Lucocisterna (1324, 1365) and Sanluri (1409), in Sardinia; along with those at Ponza (1435), Troia (1441), Carpenone (1442), Seminara (1495, 1503) and Cerignola (1503) in Naples.

FIGURE 4.10 Men-at-arms. Relief at the gate of the Castel Nuovo of Naples, 15th century. (Photography by Mario Lafuente Gómez)

Francesc de Eiximenis, in the abovementioned work (*Lo dotzè del Crestià*: vol. I, chaps CCXXVIII–CCXC), sets out a considered reflection on the different ways to undertake battle, gathering a complete selection of examples taken from the classical authors and from literary sources on chivalric themes. According to the Franciscan, there were three ways of fighting in war: that where all the soldiers of the army fight on foot, as was the custom with English and Scottish companies; that where all combatants fight on horseback, as did the Hungarians and the Turks; and, finally, the strategy that combined the use of cavalry and infantry, which all armies had used in the past and which, in the late 14th century, continued to be applied in the Hispanic kingdoms. In the latter case, Eiximenis claims that horse fighting was, at least in his days, much more dangerous than foot fighting, which shows how effective foot soldier companies had become during the central decades of the 14th century. In order to try to safeguard the integrity of the men on horseback, the author insists on the need, for each of the combatants assembled, to enter into combat with two or three pages in order to safeguard the mount, in the event the knight should fight on foot or, in the worst case, if he was shot down.

Logistics and finance

Having overcome the state of secular rivalry with the Andalusian powers – or circumscribed their manifestations to a very localized geographical area, located on the borders between the district of Orihuela, in the kingdom of Valencia, and the Nazari kingdom of Granada – the endowment system of the armies during a campaign underwent a major process of sophistication, the first steps of which could already be detected in the second half of the 13th century. The abandonment of the ancient pattern of plunder and territorial conquest against Islam and, therefore, the collapse of traditional spoils from military activity, forced the sovereigns of the Crown of Aragon to look for alternative sources of income with which to pay for the military service of their own vassals as well as occasionally for those external companies recruited for that purpose. In fact, around 1300, historical circumstances changed significantly and the prevailing war contexts, from then on, were determined by dynastic arguments, in which the prospects of conquest were rather exceptional and, hence, it was necessary to have prior material support capable of covering the deployment of potential military resources.

However, the change in the geopolitical scene was not incompatible with the continuity of some of the economic resources used by the monarchs in the

previous period. Of all of these, the one that lasted longest was what has been called the *servicio de hueste*, which was demanded in almost all the peninsular conflicts undertaken during the 14th century, beginning with the campaign led against the city of Almería in 1309. However, beyond the survival of solutions inherited from the past, the Late Middle Ages constituted a period of profound innovations in terms of war financing and, in general, tax systems, especially from the mid-14th century onwards. Between 1357 and 1365 a system of general and centralized public taxation was adopted in each of the three peninsular states of the Crown of Aragon, along with the kingdom of Majorca. Its management was monopolized by the *Diputaciones del General*.

The axis of this new system was based on the request for particular economic services on the part of the monarchy and its negotiation in the *Cortes* of each one of the states of the Crown. However, there were certain other instruments, not necessarily incompatible with taxation, which were also regularly used. These included the division of the royal domain, that is, the sale of jurisdictional rights over different places and their acquisition either by members of the nobility or by the most important cities. In these cases, the population complained because, for them, this fact meant becoming vassals of a lord and, consequently, being downgraded. Nevertheless, this was largely used by the monarchs during the 14th century, beginning with Jaime II on the eve of the conquest of Sardinia in 1323–1325.

Armament

In the 14th and 15th centuries, armour became gradually more sophisticated, as a result of technical innovations in iron and steel forging, the trend towards professional specialization in urban workshops dedicated to the manufacture of weapons, and the multiplication of medium and long-distance commercial networks, which significantly expanded the supply of this type of goods and, at the same time, stimulated their demand among an increasingly larger sector of the population.

With regard to equipment for heavy cavalry men-at-arms, from the beginning of the 14th century, there was a slow but determined transformation of elements destined to protect the limbs, through the use of specific pieces that, over time, resulted in full body armour. These novelties did not mean, however, the abandonment of previous elements; on the contrary, both the metal mesh and other pieces used to protect the knight's body lasted for decades. Among them, it is possible to emphasize the mail coats and the surcoats and, in particular, the *lorigones*, made of thick fabrics reinforced with

strips of leather or small metallic sheets. The *lorigones*, too, were the visible pieces of the knight's clothing and, therefore, they were often decorated with symbolic items. One of them, employed in the great war with Castile from 1356 to 1366, was the cross of St George, a red cross on a white background, which king Pedro IV ordered to be placed on the clothes of the fighters. In this sense, it should be noted that the average economic value of a full body armour has been estimated in the context of the kingdom of Valencia in the middle of the 15th century, at around 175 pounds, equivalent to the annual income of a small lordship in the kingdom of Valencia and similar to about eight years of salary of a construction worker in 1429–1430 (Sáiz Serrano 2008).

The equipment of the foot soldiers was also the object of some important modifications, regarding offensive and defensive armament. In the first case, it is possible to emphasize the progressive sophistication of the crossbows – in the middle of the 14th century, there were already four different types: spur, hook, lathe and rack. Finishings involved glazed, unglazed, Genoese, belt, lined and unlined crossbows and the list would be much longer if we went further and mentioned variables in weight, size and materials used. Their average price, in the decades of 1350 and 1360, when the demand for this type of weapon was very high because of the war with Castile, was between one and two pounds per unit. The equipment of the other foot soldiers was much less sophisticated than that of crossbowmen and was generally an adaptation of elements already used in the High Middle Ages.

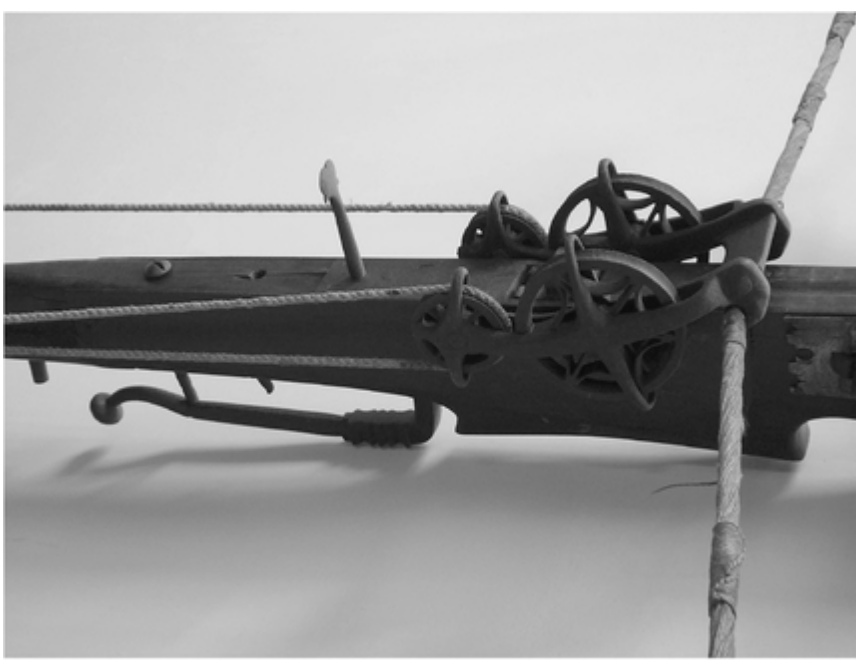

FIGURE 4.11 Detail of a lathe crossbow (Castle of Angelis, Genova), 14th century.

(Photography by Mario Lafuente Gómez)

Finally, we should not forget that from the middle of the 14th century firearms began to be used in the Crown of Aragon, although the manufacturing techniques of these weapons underwent major improvements from the end of the century. The earliest known pieces of this type were the thunder-crossbows (*ballestas de tro*), mostly associated with the defence of the most important towns and cities, the form and operation of which remain difficult to know in detail. According to the main sources, thunder-crossbows were still a very primitive type of cannon. Their metal reed was composed of two pieces that fitted longitudinally and secured with ropes or pieces of wood. The manufacture of these instruments demanded remarkable technical skill, still not widespread in the late 1350s. The only masters who specialized in the construction of these documented instruments at the time were located in Barcelona, from where in 1363 they had to move to Zaragoza, by order of the king. Along with them, other craftsmen, mostly blacksmiths, were involved in the manufacture of these weapons, providing concrete pieces. For example, several Muslim blacksmiths, as well as producing all kinds of weapon parts (especially arrow points), also helped with the finishings of some of these thunder-crossbows.

Fortifications

During the 13th and 14th centuries, military architecture in the medieval West underwent a process of change in designing and building fortifications. This process has been defined as a transition from a 'passive' defensive system, where the criterion of the refuge castle aesthetically associated with the Romanesque world, had prevailed, as we saw in the first part of the chapter, towards the adoption of an 'active' defence, where the castle would be equipped with material means to facilitate attack from the inside, including constructions at the time which, given their morphology, could be considered as falling within the Gothic world. The transformations in the fortresses built in this period can be summarized in the following six points: relocation of the keeps next to the wall instead of being in the centre, and their polygonal layout; multiplication of towers attached to the walls, some of them circular in layout (*cubelos*); generalization of vertical shooting systems (balconies with machicolations and murder holes); the appearance of barbicans (walls built to protect the gates of the fortress, sometimes not closed on themselves); framing of the gates between towers; and lengthening of the battlements along with new merlon designs (for example, with embrasures and arrow-holes).

Furthermore, the descriptions of fortifications collected from documentary sources usually refer to the construction of trenches (called *valles* or *cavas*) outside the fortress. These elements served to delay the approach of men and machines to the wall during a siege. For instance, we can find a description of this in an order given by the king Pedro IV to Sancho Ramírez de Ladron, Judge of Teruel, regarding the works of the castle of Cella in the summer of 1358. Other techniques used to bring out the strength of the fortifications were the *talladas*, which consisted of cutting the rocky surface on which the fortress walls were built. Thus, it was possible to increase the height of the walls, accentuating the usefulness of their towers and battlefields. This procedure is documented in Borja, where, after the fall of part

FIGURE 4.12 Detail of the Castle of Bijuesca (Aragon). It is a typical case of military architecture of the 14th century, with machicolations, barbicans, battlements, murder hole, merlons with embrases and arrow-holes. (Photography by Mario Lafuente Gómez)

of the wall surrounding the village, located between the church and the gate, during the war of the Two Pedros (1356–1366), it was decided to raise a new wall on the base of a surface using this technique. Furthermore, along with the aforementioned architectural elements, during the Late Middle Ages other complementary structures were also used, usually temporary and constructed with perishable materials, mainly wood. Out of all of them, the most

frequently used were the so-called *verdescas*, which were battlements added to the external perimeter of a tower in its upper part (Lafuente Gómez 2014: 319–327).

Naval warfare

In the last two centuries of the Middle Ages, the rulers of the crown of Aragon retained a remarkable naval power over the western Mediterranean, as evidenced in the numerous conflicts that had the sea as a stage and in which they had to face real powers in this area, such as the Italian cities of Pisa and Genoa. The axis of the system was, as we indicated in the first part of the chapter, the monarchy's ability to regulate the shipping industry, now divided between the main Catalan ports and the cities of Valencia (from the end of the 13th century) and Palma (since 1344), and, above all, to manage an efficient system of military mobilization by sea.

The hierarchical structure of the armies of the Crown of Aragon continued to be led during the first decades of the 14th century by the admiral, a position held successively by some of the most outstanding members of the Catalan and Majorcan aristocracy. In the 1350s, this position ended up consolidating itself as a permanent institution and was patrimonialized by Hugo Folch, first Count of Cardona, in 1357. However, at that time, the king created the position of a general captain of the navy, of a temporary character but independent of the admiralty, which ended up becoming a rather honorific title. One of the first general captains of the armies of the Crown was Bernat de Cabrera, who in 1354 wrote a detailed regulation on mobilizing and directing the navy, known as *Ordinacions sobre lo feyt de la mar* (Capmany y de Montpalau 1787: 1–21). Likewise, in order to coordinate the leadership of the army, a vice-admiral was also designated in each of the maritime states of the Crown (Ladero Quesada 2010: 271–272). Under the authority of the general captain, the admiral and the vice-admirals were those responsible for each of the boats, and were in charge of governing both the crew and the combatants. The *Ordinaciones* of 1354 describe the system used to recruit each of the members of the navy, as well as the functions they were to execute and the different salaries to be paid. Furthermore, along with crew members and combatants, each boat had personnel specialized in sanitary duties, as recommended by Arnau de Vilanova in his brief treatise *Almarie Regime*, set down in 1309 by order of king Jaime II, and as expressly ordered by the *Ordinaciones* of 1354.

From a technical point of view, the Crown of Aragon's navy had a typical Mediterranean nature, characterized by the versatility and lightness of its

vessels, which can be divided into two main groups: on the one hand, the ships built specifically for war, that is, galleys, which in turn had a relatively varied typology depending on their size and combat strength; and, on the other hand, those that had a mixed functionality which, despite being built for trading purposes, could be adapted, if necessary, to carry out military functions. This second group included *leños* (see Glossary), *naves* and *cocas*.

Ideology of war

The change in the geopolitical scenario after the end of the territorial expansion against Islam during the second half of the 13th century meant the progressive abandonment of the, until then, dominant military discourse in the territories of the Crown of Aragon and which, as we saw in the first part of this chapter, had been conditioned by the context of centenary rivalry with Muslim powers. From the beginning of the 14th century, however, the great majority of the warlike conflicts in which the Crown of Aragon was involved developed within the framework of Christendom, a symbolic space in which the old postulates on the holy war were no longer operative nor did it make sense to appeal to the spirit of the crusade. Both the monarchy and some prominent members of the aristocracy of the Crown of Aragon continued to directly participate in military campaigns against Islamic states (including Granada, Morocco and Tunis), and virtually all of these conflicts were recognized as crusades by the papacy, but the political breadth of this was much less, in any case, than the process of feudal conquest and colonization of the peninsular territory. On the other hand, the wars against Castile, Navarre, France, Genoa, Pisa, Milan or the Judges of Arborea, declared during the 14th and 15th centuries, had great political consequences, and considerable effects on the economic or institutional sphere. This new situation stimulated a new discourse on how to wage a just war.

This new discourse was constructed from a series of cultural categories taken, mainly, from Roman law, the practical sense of which lay precisely in its capacity to generate collective identities and thus to bind society in a top-down manner. The first of these was identified with the term *tierra* (land), which was used by the sovereigns of the Crown of Aragon to designate all territories and persons in the regions subject to its authority, which also included common ancestors and future generations. The *tierra* was, in effect, a material and symbolic reference, the boundaries of which were made to coincide with the territory of each of the Crown states – that is, the kingdoms of Aragon, Valencia and Mallorca, together with the principality of Catalonia –

without a collective identity common to the whole of the dominions of the monarchy ever being developed, either by royal initiative or by the action of any other social agent. Along with this idea, in the Late Middle Ages the use of concepts such as 'republic' (*res publica*) or 'common good' also started to become more widespread, which came to support social integration within one political space. And last but not least, it is necessary to emphasize the efficacy of the concept of 'nature', which served to draw a solid link among the whole population under the authority of the king and the land, that is, the material referent of sovereignty (Cawsey 2002).

On the other hand, the 14th and 15th centuries also witnessed the propagation of cults and devotions of a dynastic and, by extension, civic and territorial character in the Crown of Aragon, as happened in the rest of the feudal West. Among the divinities who became the referents of this new state spirituality, the holy warriors, whose devotion had begun to spread in some cases already during the High Middle Ages, became especially important. As is known, in the Crown of Aragon the main holy warrior was St George. Although the first expressions of devotion to this saint by Crown rulers date back to the 13th century – with Pedro II and, above all, Jaime I – it was not until the middle of the 14th century, in the reign of Pedro IV, that it became consciously stimulated by the king. Thus, at this juncture, the monarch carried out a fundamental reformulation of the order of cavalry of St George, promoted the adoption of saint symbols on the armours of the men-at-arms recruited for the Crown, ordered the building of a chapel consecrated to the martyr in the royal palace of Zaragoza, established 23 April as a feast day (which was the Catholic Church's day devoted to St George) and even intervened in the liturgy of the mass to include commemorations dedicated to St George. Specifically, the king sought the help of the saint in order to obtain the final victory against the Castilian army in 1356.

Main campaigns

Mediterranean wars

Dispute over Sicily (1282–1301)

The war the Crown of Aragon engaged in against the Anjou and the French monarchy for dominion over Sicily lasted for almost 20 years (1282–1301) and

consisted of three main phases. The first of these, between 1282 and 1285, began with the conquest of the island by king Pedro III, who, in addition, occupied some key positions in the south of the Italian Peninsula. Moreover, the Aragonese monarch managed to stop the French offensives in the north of Aragon and Catalonia, with well-remembered acts of arms like the defence of Gerona, against the forces of the king of France. The second phase lasted from 1285 to 1291, when the war became more complicated, especially at the diplomatic level, since the Crown of Aragon passed into the hands of the direct heir of king Pedro, Alfonso III, while Sicily was held by his second son, Jaime. This also entailed the multiplication of battlefronts, since in addition to Aragon, Catalonia and Sicily, the kingdom of Mallorca also became involved. Finally, the third phase began in 1291 when, after Alfonso III's death, his brother Jaime, until then king of Sicily, succeeded him as king of the Crown of Aragon. This fact implied a return to the situation caused by Pedro III in 1282 and widely answered by the papacy. For this reason, to try to solve the conflict, the affected parties met in Anagni, near Rome, in 1295. There, Jaime II of Aragon agreed to return Sicily to the papacy and Mallorca to his uncle Jaime, but received approval from the Pope, Bonifacio VIII, to conquer Corsica and Sardinia in the future, as compensation for the abandonment of Sicily. However, the Sicilians did not accept this solution and Federico, younger brother of king Jaime, was proclaimed king, thus initiating a new armed conflict that only terminated in 1301, with the peace of Caltabellota. According to this agreement, Federico was legitimized as the sovereign of Sicily.

The conquest of Sardinia (1323–1324)

The conquest and colonization of the island of Sardinia by the Crown of Aragon was undoubtedly one of the most significant actions in the history of the western Mediterranean in the Late Middle Ages (Schena and Tognetti 2011). There were two opponents of the Crown of Aragon's wishing to obtain dominion over the island, in this first campaign. On the one side, the Judge of Arborea, Hugo II and, on the other side, the *comune* of Pisa, which owned important port towns, among them the Castle of Cagliari (Lafuente Gómez 2011: 98–111). From the military point of view, the most important episode of this first expedition occurred on 29 February 1324, when the army led by the *Infant* Alfonso faced the companies of Manfredo de la Gherardesca, count of Donoratico, close to Lucocisterna, near Cagliari. Although it is not possible to speak of a clear victory for either of the two armies, the troops of the Crown of Aragon came out of the battlefield in better condition and were finally able to

force the surrender of their enemies. Nevertheless, from then on, the authority of the Crown of Aragon in Sardinia was faced with the resistance of the local powers. This attitude was a source for conflicts both on the island and at sea, which gave rise to four great military expeditions supported by all the states of the Crown of Aragon in 1354–1355, 1368, 1371 and 1409.

The first conquest of the kingdom of Naples (1442)

The first conquest of the kingdom of Naples by the Crown of Aragon took place during the reign of Alfonso V (1416–1458) and was carried out as a result of an ambitious diplomatic and military programme led by the king himself. The mission began in May 1420, when the monarch placed himself at the head of a powerful squadron directed towards the island of Sardinia, with the *a priori* aim of ending a new revolt which had broken out on the island and, at the same time, of facing the Genoese navy off the coast of Corsica. However, during the operation, the queen of Naples, Juana II, appointed Alfonso V as Duke of Calabria and heir to the Neapolitan throne. The next year, the king decided to move to Sicily with part of his army. His military potential was not competitive enough to face the mercenary troops hired by Louis of Anjou, who had also claimed the throne of Naples. Following this, the attempts to capture the throne of Naples were organized in four great offensives. The first began in the spring of 1424 and involved the dispatch of a new fleet of 24 galleys, led by the count of Luna. The second, from May 1431, implied a significant increase in military investment, which resulted in the mobilization of a fleet of 27 galleys and 10 ships, with 2,000 men-at-arms and 1,000 crossbowmen. The third involved the consolidation of the fortress of Ischia and included the siege of Gaeta, but also the defeat of the Aragonese navy in Ponza (4 August 1435). The last operation was the pitched

FIGURE 4.13 Tower of the Elephant at the Castle of Cagliari (Sardinia), 14th century. (Photography by Mario Lafuente Gómez)

Battle of Troia (July 1441). The result of the combats was the overwhelming victory of the forces of the Crown of Aragon, which gave rise to the final surrender of the defenders of Naples in June 1442. Finally, Alfonso V could make his triumphal entry into Naples on 26 February 1443 (Ladero Quesada 2010: 340–342).

The second conquest of the kingdom of Naples (1504)

In spite of the large investment that the conquest of Naples had demanded from the states of the Crown of Aragon, Alfonso V decided that, upon his death, sovereignty over this kingdom would not follow the same destiny as the rest of his dominions, and gave it to his only son, born from an illicit relationship with Giraldona de Carlino. This way, Ferrante I was king of Naples between 1458 and 1494. However, the kingdom only remained under the dynasty of Aragonese origin for two more generations, since Ferrante's successor, Alfonso II, gave in to the assault of Charles VIII of France and abdicated in favour of his son Ferrante II in 1495. This latter monarch was immersed in conflicts between the French monarch and the Catholic Kings in Italy until 1497, when he died without heirs. The second conquest of the kingdom of Naples was therefore part of the strategies deployed by the Catholic Kings to consolidate their power in the western Mediterranean and particularly in the Italian Peninsula, in a context of rivalry with the French monarchy and the papacy.

FIGURE 4.14 Alfonso V makes his triumphal entry in Naples. Frieze at the gate of the Castel Nuovo of Naples, 15th century. The inscriptions read: *Alfonsus rex hispanicus siculus italicus pius clemens invictus* [King of Spain, Sicily and Italy, pious, merciful, unconquered] and *Alfonsus Regum Princeps hanc condidit arcem* [Alfonso, first among the kings, built this castle] (Serra Desfilis 2008: 23). (Photography by Mario Lafuente Gómez)

The diplomatic and military fabric explaining this context is very complex, although it can be divided into two major phases. In the first one (1495–1498), the forces of the Catholic Kings, led by Gonzalo Fernandez de Cordoba, carried

out a war of positions, based on missions besieging fortifications and raids against the French army. Among the most important operations, at this time, was the capture of Atella (July 1496) and, above all, the expulsion of the French garrison that controlled Ostia (March 1497). In the second phase (1498–1503), operations were mainly focused on control of ports and the most significant actions took place in Barletta – besieged between September 1502 and March 1503 –, Taranto and Cosenza. In spite of this, two important battles were carried out inland: the first, at Seminara, where Hernando de Andrada defeated the French troops and occupied their positions in Calabria; and the second, in Cerignola (28 April 1503), where Fernandez de Cordoba managed to defeat the companies led by the duke of Nemours, viceroy of France, who was killed during the combat. Afterwards, passage to Naples opened up and, in fact, at the end of that year, in the battle of the Garel-lano river, the Great Captain achieved a new victory that forced the final surrender of Gaeta on 2 January 1504 (Ladero Quesada 2010: 356–370; Ladero Quesada and Ladero Galán 2010: 509).

Peninsular conflicts

The war of the Strait: the campaign against Almería (1309)

From the point of view of the Crown of Aragon, collaboration with the Crown of Castile in the campaign against Almería in 1309 turned into the recruitment and mobilization of the Aragonese and Catalan nobility, and above all into the collection of large sums as a donation by Jaime II. To carry out the campaign, Jaime II planned a combined mobilization, by land and sea, involving an army of more than 1,300 horsemen and more than 4,000 foot soldiers, sustained for four months thanks to the collection of an important sum from all the states of the Crown. However, the result of the expedition was totally contrary to the interests of Castilian and Aragonese commanders, mainly because of the inability of both to prolong the enormous logistical effort required to maintain their own armies. In particular, the cost of the army of the Crown of Aragon in this context amounted to 289,000 pounds, while the income obtained was 242,000 pounds. Note that, in this sense, more than 118,000 pounds were spent only on the payment of naval troops (10 galleys and 5 *leños*), and another 128,000 pounds were used for the payment of the wages of soldiers and men-at-arms (Baydal Sala 2009: 57–154).

The war of the Two Pedros against Castile (1356–1366)

The most violent war of those among the peninsular Christian kingdoms during the Middle Ages began in June 1356. The origins of the conflict have traditionally been explained by dynastic arguments, behind which there was actually a major rupture within the political society of both Crowns. From the strictly military point of view, according to administrative sources the companies that fought in the Crown of Aragon reached a maximum of almost 4,200 men-at-arms (February to June 1357) and not less than 10,000 foot soldiers. This was undoubtedly the largest army mobilized by the Aragonese monarchs up to that moment and, in fact, only king Alfonso V was able to mobilize a larger army (Sáiz Serrano 2009: 107–108; Lafuente Gómez 2014: 92–94). Nevertheless, it is also necessary to take into account the deployment of the naval resources, above all in February 1359, during the attack of the Castilian fleet against the city of Barcelona. In this operation, according to the *Crónica del racional de Barcelona*, the Castilian forces included 32 galleys and 21 diverse vessels, while the navy of the Crown of Aragon had 26 galleys and one *leño*.

The logistics of all this military deployment was regulated by the Parliaments held in Aragon, Catalonia and Valencia. As a result of the negotiations carried out in this context, and just in the kingdom of Aragon, 560,000 pounds were paid between 1358 and the end of 1365, which means an average of 70,000 pounds per year. However, at the same time, we must also take into account the significant increase in the costs of maintaining fortifications and walled cities. The money spent on this issue, in the kingdom of Aragon, came from ecclesiastical property rents and amounted to at least 18,000 pounds. However, the procedure adopted in the capital, Zaragoza, was different, since up to four extraordinary services were collected that added another 10,750 pounds. As a result of the negotiations carried out during this period to regulate the management of the extraordinary taxation in Aragon, Catalonia and Valencia, the *Diputaciones del General* were set up (Sánchez Martínez, Furió Diego and Sesma Muñoz 2008).

Civil wars

The second Union (1347–1348)

The origins of the second Union in the kingdoms of Aragon and Valencia, in

1347, were a long series of legal and fiscal conflicts that had been accumulating since at least the beginning of the 1320s. However, the *casus belli* was the decision of the king, Pedro IV, to appoint his eldest daughter, Constanza, heir of the Crown, something that went against the succession custom of the Aragonese monarchy. This decision affected the younger brother of the monarch, Jaime of Urgel, who, in fact, had the right to become king if Pedro IV died without male descendants. In this context, the dynastic argument served to channel the previous rupture of the political society of the kingdoms of Aragon and Valencia, which was divided into two large groups, headed respectively by the king and by prince Jaime. Unfortunately, little is known about the military development of the conflict until 21 July 1348, when the civil war was decided on the battlefield, in the Aragonese town of Epila, with the victory of the king's faction.

The Catalonian civil war (1462–1472)

The Catalonian civil war began as a result of the breakdown of political consensus within the political society of the principality, which, since the end of the reign of Alfonso V, had been divided between two confrontational sides: on the one hand, king Juan II (1458–1479) with the urban popular classes and the serf peasantry (*remensa* – see Glossary); and, on the other hand, the urban oligarchies and the lords of the land, who aspired to increase their power. In the end, the king's faction prevailed over the rebels, after obtaining several important victories, among which were the siege of Gerona (1462), the Battle of Calaf (28 February 1465) and the taking of Cervera. All these actions contributed to reducing the resistance of the rebels until, on 24 October 1472, the treaty of Pedralbes was signed. As a result, Juan II recovered his authority over Catalonia and undertook to forgive the rebels and to confirm the laws and privileges of the principality (Ladero Quesada 2010: 343–344).

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5
The Kingdom of Navarre

Jon Andoni Fernández de Larrea Rojas

I The Early Middle Ages

Political and military outline

The Kingdom of Navarre originated in the area around the episcopal city of Pamplona, in the heart of old Vasconia. In fact, for several centuries it was known as the Kingdom of Pamplona. The birth of the kingdom is related to the collapse of the Visigothic power in the Middle Ebro Valley and the inability of the Franks and Muslims to impose their control over the Western Pyrenees.

The region was made a tributary of the Islamic invaders, who sometimes sent military garrisons to assert their authority. After a succession of military incursions from Frankia and Córdoba (the Franks were defeated twice in Roncesvalles in 778 and 824), an autonomous political unit with strong links with the Banu Qasi finally emerged. The Banu Qasi were a Spanish family of Muslim converts, who represented the authority of the Emir of Córdoba in the Middle Ebro, but who enjoyed a remarkable degree of autonomy. In 824, political authority in Pamplona was granted to their ally Eneko Aritza, the first sovereign in the kingdom.

The successors of Eneko managed to weather the convulsive 9th century, but in 905 a new dynasty finally ascended to the throne. The new king, Sancho I (905–925), undertook a much more aggressive military policy, along with his allies in the Kingdom of Leon. His conquests included the region of Rioja Alta (Nájera) and the annexation of the Christian county of Aragon in 922. The strong counteroffensives launched from Córdoba in 920 and 924 failed to stop Pamplona.

The alliance and the marriage ties with Leon propitiated the military cooperation of both kingdoms against Córdoba, but also had unexpected and grave consequences. The problems caused by the dethroning of Sancho I of Leon (in 958) led Pamplona to intervene, asking the Muslims in Córdoba for assistance. This was followed by a period of intense Islamic military activity.

Under al-Masur, the troops of the Caliphate piled enormous pressure on the Christian lands to the North. The last quarter of the 10th century witnessed a succession of campaigns in which the Christians, separately, together or even in coalition with rivals such as Galib, suffered one defeat after another.

During the early 11th century, Navarre rose as the leader of the Christian kingdoms in the Iberian Peninsula. The disintegration of the Caliphate and the succession of problems in Leon allowed Sancho III of Pamplona (1004–1035) to annex the former counties of Castilla and Ribagorza, and to even try to do the same with the Duchy of Gascogne.

Sancho III was followed as King of Pamplona by his first-born García Sánchez III (1035–1054). His second son, Fernando, was ruler of Castile, the third, Gonzalo ruled Sobrarbe and Ribagorza, and the fourth, Ramiro, ruled Aragon; all of them recognized the primacy of García. For a while, the brothers ruled in harmony and Pamplona was able to complete the conquest of La Rioja, taking Calahorra in 1045. García went to the aid of Fernando in the invasion of Leon, which led to the defeat of Bermudo III in the Battle of Tamarón (1037). Fernando thus became King of Leon, but, over time, the rivalry between the two brothers grew, leading to the Battle of Atapuerca (1054) and the death of García (Lacarra 1973: vol. 1).

FIGURE 5.1 Unarmoured knight. Capital in the Church of Saint Prudence, Armentia. (Author's collection)

Recruitment and organization of the armies

Military obligations and recruitment

Obligatory military service of free men in the kingdom was known as *host*, *fossato* or, in the autochthonous Basque language, *ozterate*. The main problem historians have is that the concept does not appear in written records until quite late, 1033, in association with the granting of exemptions to given individuals **(**Larrea 1998: 242). In addit ion to this general military obligation, the records also attest to the transfer of property in *prestimonium*, which was the Iberian equivalent of the *beneficium*, from the opening quarter of the 11th century. Until 1072, this royal recompense was entirely at the discretion of the king (Larrea 1998: 268).

Composition of the armies

Personal guard of monarchs

A document dating from 921 mentions the *scola regis*, a body of men close to the king which, presumably, had a military function. This body is referred to in another document dated from 983 as *toga palatii*. This entourage may be identified with the *fideles* attested in other documents (Larrea 1998: 218).

FIGURE 5.2 Knight and infantryman. Wall paintings in the Church of the Assumption, Alaiza. (Author's collection)

Noble militias

The earliest mention of military clients under the patronage of high-ranking persons dates from 1031. We assume that services were rewarded through the transfer of property in *prestimonium*.

Castle garrisons and tenancies

The military obligations of the king's subjects included manning and maintaining fortifications. Our main sources for the study of castles in the kingdom are written records, especially Islamic texts, and, to a lesser extent, archaeology. The early kingdom had few fortifications: Leguín, Aibar, Javier, Ujué, Tafalla and San Esteban de Monjardín had already been built by the 9th and 10th centuries. Muez and Sakhra al-Qays were destroyed before the turn of the millennium, while Cárcar, Falces, Peralta, Funes, Caparroso and Carcastillo were conquered by al-Mansur and recovered by Sancho III. The fortresses of Garaño, Lizarrara, Sangüesa, Peña and Arlas appear in sources for the first time between 1000 and 1076. These fortresses were chiefly located on the eastern and southern frontiers, alongside the Ebro and Aragon rivers. From the 10th century and the early decades of the 11th century, castles were entrusted to barons or members of the royal family and this was considered a

prestigious, and temporal commission (Larrea 1998: 264–269).

Chain of command

Muslim and Christian chronicles frequently mention the king at the front of the army. Apart from the king, other members of the royal family could be in command, either conducting independent operations or at the head of contingents sent in support of other Christian kingdoms. This was, for example, the case with *Infante* Ramiro de Viguera, brother of Sancho II, who commanded the troops defeated in Estercuel (975). Ramiro also led the Navarrese troops that joined forces with the Castilians and the rebel Muslim general Galib, only to be defeated by al-Mansur in Torrevicente (981). Texts are generally too succinct for a precise chain of command to be discerned. In any case, Islamic texts generally list a large number of counts among enemy casualties, counts who were frequently nothing but lesser officers.

Military operations

Chevauchées

Given the paucity of the Christian sources, we know more about Islamic incursions and Navarrese countermeasures than about Christian attacks. The written accounts claim that, during the Muez campaign (920), before the Battle of Valdejunquera, the Navarrese troops skirmished against the wings of the attacking army. According to the chronicles of the great incursion of 924, which reached the heart of the kingdom, the Navarrese troops decided to attack the emir's troops in mountain passes, although they also fought a pitched battle in San Esteban de Deyo.

FIGURE 5.3 Castle. Wall paintings at the Church of the Assumption, Alaiza. (Author's collection)

Siege warfare

Our information about siege operations is very limited. We know that, sometimes, fortresses were surrendered because of hunger, an example being Viguera in 923. On other occasions, the besiegers went on the assault, for example the failed attack of a Christian coalition against Gormaz in 975. Unfortunately, sources are totally silent concerning the means and machines used in this sort of operation.

Pitched battles

Once more, the paucity of the sources limits the scope of our historical interpretation, but some conclusions can, nevertheless, be drawn. Generally, Christian hosts tended to avoid pitched battles with Muslim troops until the reinforcements sent by other kingdoms had arrived. The Christian strategy was

generally defensive, aimed only at stopping Islamic incursions. Tactics also seem to have been defensive. Sometimes the Christian troops formed behind a river, such as at Wadi-Arun in 816, and in others, they used a mountain defensively, for instance the Navarrese forces in San Esteban de Deyo in 924, or the allied armies in Simancas (939) and Cervera (1000). On other occasions, they reinforced their position with artificial defences; the account of Wadi-Arun speaks of barricades and ditches. The largely static nature of pitched battles meant that, sometimes, they would go on for days, like in Simancas and Wadi-Arun. In general, Christians accepted battles in a location where they had a free escape route, leaving the initiative of the attack to the Muslim troops. Only in the Battle of Cervera did the Christians take the first step, charging downhill to the surprise of al-Mansur. The Battle of Cervera is the only one in which the disposition of the Christian troops can be more or less discerned. The contingents from Castile, Leon and Pamplona formed three bodies; the wings, made of, or led by, cavalry took the initiative, routing the enemy and putting alMansur in a position of serious difficulty. Despite the defensive nature of most Christian battle orders, the Islamic sources stress the cavalry as being the decisive force for both armies.

As regards pitched battles between Christians, information is even scantier, especially for the 11th century. There is next to no information about such significant battles as Tamarón (1037) and Atapuerca (1054). In both cases, the extant accounts are short and untrustworthy.

Armament

The Muslim chronicles often mention the Christian cavalry as their worst enemy but it is uncertain whether they are referring to heavy (armoured) or to light cavalry. The evidence concerning infantry equipment is also scarce.

There is some certainty that only members of the elite could afford to go to war equipped as heavy cavalrymen. A document dated from 918 indicates that king Sancho I donated a mail hauberk, a shield, a lance, a horse and a mule (with their respective saddles and silver bits) to the monastery of Leire. This donation was completed with two tents and a pair of eunuchs, which may suggest that these possessions were war booty (Larrea 1998: 220).

Fortifications

The earliest fortifications in the kingdom can be divided into two types: urban

walls, in Pamplona and Olite, which were in many cases the surviving Late Roman walls, and castles.

The earliest Navarrese castles were simple fortifications with a circular or a square tower on a hilltop. Towers were built with stone and timber and might be surrounded by an earthwork and a palisade. In fact, they were without exception small in size and structurally simple (Martinena 1980: 17–18).

II The High Middle Ages

Political and military outline

Sancho IV succeeded his father Garcia in 1054 and the kingdom he inherited was beginning to show signs of political and social strife. Sancho IV failed to handle the nobles and to take advantage of the fragmentation of the Muslim kingdoms. In 1072, the *ricoshombres* (see Glossary) from Pamplona presented him with a charter that notably limited his royal powers, but this did not ease the internal pressure and the king was assassinated in a conspiracy carried out by his own brothers in 1076.

Sancho IV's distant relatives, who ruled Leon and Aragon, took advantage of the commotion caused by his death. Alfonso VI took over the westernmost territories, Álava, Vizcaya and Rioja, and Sancho Ramírez (1076–1094) took over the east of the kingdom and the throne of Pamplona.

The period of union with Aragon, from 1076 to 1134, was a time of intense military pressure on the Muslims in the Middle Ebro Valley, under the command of Pedro I (1094–1104) and the aggressive Alfonso I (1104–1134) (Lema 1997). Despite occasional setbacks, the period resulted in the conquest of Huesca in 1096, Barbastro in 1100, Tudela in 1119, and Calatayud and Daroca in 1120. The most spectacular feat, however, was the conquest of the great city of Zaragoza in 1118, after a six-month siege.

Alfonso I married the heiress of Leon, Urraca, but the marriage was disastrous. Alfonso regained the former western territories, Álava, Vizcaya and Rioja, but the marital disputes and the disorder that dominated the old western kingdom resulted in war between Alfonso and Urraca and led to Alfonso I's military intervention in Leon in 1110–1112.

During the last years of his reign, Alfonso renewed his offensive against the eastern regions of al-Andalus. A major campaign that spanned 1125 and 1126 laid waste to Valencia and eastern Andalusia. This impetus did not lead to

territorial gains and the king's rule ended with the heavy defeat at Fraga in 1134.

The death of Alfonso I broke the succession line once more. In his will, the king bequeathed his kingdom to the military orders in the Holy Land. As was to be expected, the aristocracy did not allow this to happen, and while the Aragonese barons appointed Ramiro, Alfonso's monk brother, as king, the *ricoshombres* from Pamplona appointed García Ramírez (1134–1150), heir of a bastard line of García Sánchez III. If this was not chaotic enough, Alfonso VII of Leon, born from Urraca's first marriage, also bid for the inheritance of his stepfather.

The restored Kingdom of Pamplona kept the western territories recovered by Alfonso I, as well as Tudela, but García Ramírez was forced to fight for the territorial integrity of his kingdom. On the one hand, he had to fence off the expansionist ambitions of the Aragonese and, on the other hand, he had to deal with the hostility of the Pope, who advocated for the validity of Alfonso's will. No longer sharing a border with al-Andalus, García Ramírez participated in Alfonso VII of Leon's campaigns, in particular in his attack on Almería in 1147.

The denomination Kingdom of Navarre was adopted during the reign of García Ramírez's son, Sancho VI (1150–1194). Sancho VI tried to take advantage of the minority of Alfonso VIII of Castile to regain some ground in Rioja and eastern Castile. His success, however, was short-lived, and in 1173 and 1174 strong Castilian forces invaded the heart of the kingdom and defeated the Navarrese troops in two pitched battles. The marriage of Sancho VI's daughter Berenguela and Richard I of England brought *Infante* Sancho to the aid of his brother-in-law in Aquitaine in 1192 and 1194.

The long reign of Sancho VII (1194–1234) was initially beset by the constant pressure posed by the Aragonese and Castilians. After a first attack in 1198, Sancho VII marched to Islamic lands to seek help from the Almohads, but in vain. While he was away, during the spring of 1199, Alfonso VIII invaded Álava and besieged Vitoria for six months. In January 1200, the king granted the defenders permission to surrender. Navarre had lost the western territories – Álava, Guipúzcoa and Durango – for good (Fernández de Larrea 2000: 425–438).

The losses in the Iberian Peninsula were partially offset by some expansion to the north. From 1196 onwards, Sancho VII expanded his influence to the north of the Pyrenees, where several nobles declared their allegiance to him, such as Arnaud Raymond, viscount of Tartas and lord of Mixe and Ostabarets, in 1196.

Blocked by his two powerful neighbours, Aragon and Castile, Sancho VII still tried to participate in the campaigns against the Muslims, but his

occasional intervention did not earn him significant territorial gains. Probably the most emblematic event in this regard was Sancho VII's participation in the great Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212), in which he commanded one of the Christian contingents.

Dejected and bitter, the last king of the dynasty left the throne to his nephew Thibaut IV, count of Champagne. The arrival of Thibaut I was a turning point in the relationship between the king and his kingdom. In the following decades, Navarre was reduced to one piece – and not always the main one – in a territorial conglomerate dominated by a French noble, prince or king. This forced the local nobility and urban elites to define and codify their relationship with the king. This crystallized in a legal *corpus* known as *Fuero General* (see Glossary). Furthermore, subordination to a foreign prince drastically reduced the kingdom's direct participation in military operations (Lacarra 1973: vol. 2).

This transformation may be quantified. In the violent 12th century, Navarre was on a war footing for 57 years, while in the 13th century this number dropped to 19. Moreover, it must be taken into consideration that, of these, five correspond to the reign of Sancho VII, three to Navarre's participation in a Crusade in Palestine and Tunisia, and one to a civil war.

The civil war of 1276 took place in a context of dynastic turmoil, involving the transition between the house of Champagne and the French royal house. Resistance to the new dynasty was crushed and the Navarrese districts of Pamplona razed to the ground.

FIGURE 5.4 King, knight and infantryman. Wall paintings in the Church of the Assumption, Alaiza. (Author's collection)

Recruitment and organization of the armies

Military obligations and recruitment

Military service was obligatory for peasants, and was written into the law in the *Fuero General*, compiled before 1270. Villagers also had to pay for their own expenses in the field. Probably in the 1070s, during the rule of the weak Sancho IV, barons and *infanzones* managed to have their obligatory and free military service reduced to a maximum of three days per year.

From the last quarter of the 11th century onwards, urban communities began acquiring exemption charters which considerably reduced their military obligations. Sometimes, their service was made equivalent to that of the *hidalgos* (see Glossary), which was limited to three days per year. Other cities were only compelled to send troops to pitched battles. The charters that regulated peasant communities, however, still imposed the obligation of joining hosts and *chevauchées* (Fernández de Larrea 1992: 40–41).

The covenant signed in 1072 confirmed the inalienability of the *honores* conferred by the king in exchange for their loyalty. The feudal grant thus became the basis of the military service lent by the nobility. In 1135, during the dynastic crisis that followed the death of Alfonso I, the charter of uses and customs of *infanzones* in Aragon and Pamplona was issued. This document declared the customs expressed thereof to go back to the reign of Pedro I (1094–1104). Concerning military service, the charter reiterated the baron's obligation to serve the king for free three days a year. In exchange for royal *honores*, barons and *infanzones* were to serve at their own expense for three months a year – including the army's outbound and inbound marches. The charter established that the code that regulated the relationship between the king and his barons also applied to the relationship between the barons and their own vassals (Fernández de Larrea 2000: 425–438).

The earliest known mention of money fiefs goes back to 1122, but they were not clearly in evidence until two texts dating from 1208 and 1219. The earliest accounts of the Navarrese Crown date from 1259, 1265 and 1266. By that time, money fiefs had been fully developed. When the recipient was a *ricohombre* they were called *caballerías*, while those received by knights and squires were known as *mesnadas*. In exchange for an annual rent, mainly in cash, vassals committed to 40 days of military service per year (Fernández de Larrea 2013: 47–58).

Composition of the armies

Personal guard of monarchs

Navarrese kings continued to live surrounded by an armed entourage which never abandoned them. This force was composed of *milites* – or knights – like the ones that killed 12 men in the hamlet of Nestares in the presence of King Sancho IV in 1063. While the throne was in foreign hands, from 1234, royal military entourages disappeared from record.

Noble militias

The 1266 accounts record the troops sent by the Crown's direct vassals who were recipients of money fiefs. We do not know the number of men sent by nobles who possessed territorial fiefs. In total, the *ricoshombres* were expected to provide 191 men-at-arms, and the king's direct vassals 230 more. Armies increased in size in the early decades of the 14th century, reaching a maximum size of approximately 600 men-at-arms, although a number in the vicinity of 400 was more common (Fernández de Larrea 2013: 61–63).

Urban militias

Urban – and also rural – communities could buy military exemptions from the king. This happened, for example, before Theobald II's planned campaign in Gascony in 1266, when the towns of Estella and San Vicente de la Sonsierra paid to be exempted from sending any men. Soon, urban communities began making increasingly restrictive interpretations of their military obligations. In 1296 and 1321, the urban representatives argued that they had no obligation to follow the king outside Navarre, but that they would do so as long as this did not go against their privileges. As such, they demanded certificates saying that they were volunteers, not conscripts. Towards the end of the period, Navarrese cities claimed that obligatory military service was restricted to the territory of the kingdom, and that they would only serve beyond its borders of their own free will and at the expense of the sovereign (Fernández de Larrea 2013: 47–58).

FIGURE 5.5 Relief of a knight in the Church of Saint Julian and Saint Basilissa, Oreitia. (Author's collection)

The only operation with the participation of urban militias that we know of in detail is the 1321 expedition to punish bandits in Guipúzcoa. This campaign was a total disaster, and the Navarrese were defeated at the Battle of Beotíbar (Fernández de Larrea 2012: 1287–1294). The efficiency of the urban forces was questioned by the governor in his report, according to which, they fled at the first opportunity, leaving the governor and a handful of nobles to fend for themselves.

Castle garrisons and tenancies

Temporary *tenencias* remained the way to garrison castles until the Counts of Champagne inherited the throne in 1234 (Lema 1997). As before, during the 11th and 12th centuries, these *tenencias* were entrusted to the barons, who could hold three or more at the same time. The *tenencias* attested in the records had a duration of between three and 30 years.

From the reign of Thibaut I onwards, castles ceased to be entrusted to

ricoshom-bres and were given to knights and squires, who received the title of *alcaide*. Similarly, the financial allowances for garrisons began being managed directly by the king's financial officials. The accounts from 1266 record the existence of 67 royal castles in Navarre, apart from three or four towers and four fortified caves. The amounts handed over to the *alcaides* indicate that garrisons must have been very small, barely ten men or even less. During times of crisis, these forces could temporarily be increased.

Chain of command

Navarrese kings often led the army in the field during this period, and some became famous for it, such as Alfonso I and Sancho VII. The king's second, or his substitute if the king were absent, was known as *alférez* (*armiger* in the Latin texts). Written sources say very little about the Navarrese perspective, so much so that we do not even know who commanded the defenders of Vitoria during the six-month siege suffered by the city in 1199–1200 (Fernández de Larrea 2000: 425–438).

Parias *and mercenaries*

While his contemporaries expanded at the cost of the weak Muslims, or extorted them with the *parias* system, Sancho IV of Pamplona reached a series of agreements with the Islamic sovereigns of Zaragoza. In 1069, al-Muqtadir committed to the payment of a thousand gold coins a month for Sancho's protection against a potential French aggression. It seems that this was not the first such pact. In 1073, the King of Zaragoza committed to handing over 12,000 coins more per year, for Pamplona's protection against Sancho Ramírez of Aragón, who was Sancho's cousin. One of the clauses in the agreement specified that the King of Pamplona would send al-Muqtadir as many barons as requested, and that they would be paid as much as the mercenaries from Barcelona and Castile (Lacarra 1962: 122–134).

Military operations

As in the preceding period, there are no Navarrese chronicles, and the evidence concerning the tactical practices of Navarrese troops is, therefore, extremely scant. The best-known operations were those undertaken in the context of the

dynastic union with Aragon or in support of other Christian kingdoms against the Muslim lands, which are explained in detail in other chapters in this book.

From the early 13th century onwards, and especially during the last two-thirds of the century, Navarre underwent a period of limited military activity. Some seemingly major operations had little consequences, for instance, the campaigns launched against Gascony in 1243 and 1266 did not go beyond the burning of a few villages around Labourd.

Artistic sources, on the other hand, suggest that the Navarrese knights adopted the couched lance tactics during this period, like their European counterparts. Iconographic evidence is relatively abundant, and dates from the late 11th and 12th century. The earliest image illustrates two knights – wearing neither hauberk nor helmet – charging at each other outside the sepulchre of *Infanta* Sancha. The image comes from the Aragonese monastery of the Holy Cross of Serós and dates from the closing years of the 11th century. Similar images were carved in the church of Artaiz (c.1140) and on a capital in Santa María de Azcona, which could perhaps date from the second half of the 12th century. A capital in the monastery of Irache (c.1160) shows two hauberk-clad knights fighting, and another in the Royal Palace in Estella represents the mythical duel between the Christian paladin Roland and the Saracen giant Ferragut (late 12th century) (Uranga and Íñiguez 1973).

Armament

One of the ivories that decorate the chest of San Millán de la Cogolla depicts a knight clad with a knee-length mail haubert and a helmet with nose guard and integral mail coif. We know that the chest was ordered by King García III in 1053. Regarding written documents, the will of Baron Oriol Íñiguez (1059) provides some evidence concerning the equipment of knights and the ability of nobles to furnish their entourages. Oriol had a helmet, a shield, a sword, a belt, spurs and a saddle. Some of these items were decorated with silver. He also owned ten hauberks of French import, twelve horses and eight mules (Larrea 1998: 283).

We know about 12th-century weaponry through the reliefs carved on several churches and palaces, as well as the illuminated manuscript known as the *Bible of King Sancho*, dating from 1197. The equipment that receives the most attention is that used by knights. Two of the reliefs (churches of Artaiz and Azcona) depict knights carrying helmets and kite-shaped shields but no mail hauberk. In another two reliefs, in the Palace of Estella and the monastery of Irache, the knights are depicted wearing mail hauberks with integral coif,

but the mail does not extend to the calves, kite-shaped (the Christians) or circular (the Muslims) shields, and no helmet. Two more reliefs in the cathedral of Tudela depict knights in full armour: mail hauberks and chausses, round helmet without nose-guard and kite-shaped shields. Some of the reliefs show the knights on foot, for instance in Santa María de Sangüesa and the Palace of Estella. Those from Santa María de Sangüesa are wearing mail hauberks and carrying kite-shaped shields, while those from Estella are wearing round helmets with nose-guard. In addition, one of the knights of Sangüesa seems to be wearing an early type of enclosed helmet. The only weapons depicted are lances and swords.

The *Bible of King Sancho* is illustrated with knights and infantrymen. The mounted troops are depicted with and without mail hauberk and coif, and carrying kite-shaped or circular shields. The helmets are nasal helmets with a forward-deflected apex. The footmen are protected only by shields, either kite-shaped or round. The weapons include lances, maces and long knives. The depiction of crossbowmen is significant, for the crossbows represented belong to an early model with no stirrup.

Artistic iconography dating from the 13th century allows to track the evolution of the equipment of the knights, which is similar to that attested in the rest of Western Europe. For the protection of the head the great helm and, sometimes, the kettle hat or the cervelliere were adopted. Bodies were protected with a mail hauberk, which also covered the hands, and chausses. Shields became smaller and adopted a nearly triangular shape. In this century, personal seals start appearing in military-themed sculptural reliefs (Uranga and Íñiguez 1973).

Fortifications

Navarrese castles during this period were, for the most part, small defensive complexes. They were preferably built on hard-to-access hilltops. Although not many excavations have been carried out, it seems clear that water supply was among the foremost concerns for their constructors, who furnished them with plentiful cisterns. The largest castles were built in cities – Pamplona, Laguardia, Artajona, Tudela and Estella – generally on an elevation at one end of the fortified precinct. The mountainous geography of the country also allowed for the fortification of caves, four of which are known. Although most fortifications were built in stone, the abundant forests in the centre and the north of the kingdom led to the construction, until quite a late date, of wooden fortifications, such as the tower of Leiza (Martinena 1980: 18–21).

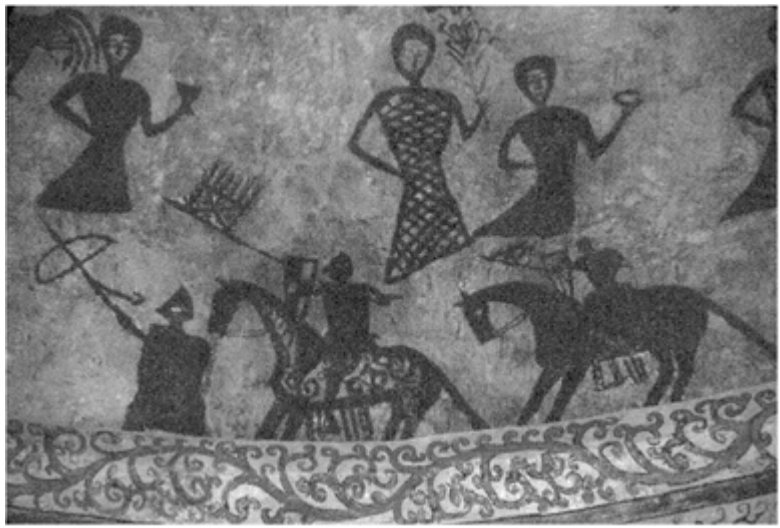

FIGURE 5.6 Crossbowman and knights. Wall paintings in the Church of the Assumption, Alaiza. (Author's collection)

III The Late Middle Ages

Political and military outline

The opening decades of the 14th century were ones of consolidation for the French kings on the Navarrese throne. The French rule was mistrusted and resisted, and the Navarrese took the first opportunity to seek independence. After the death of Charles IV in 1328, application of the salic law took Philippe de Valois to the French throne. The salic law, however, was not in operation in Navarre which gave the kingdom's elites the chance to choose Juana I (1328–1349), daughter of the late Louis I of Navarre and X of France and wife of Philippe, Count of Évreux.

Like their predecessors, Juana and Philippe spent most of their time in France, ruling through governors. This had two consequences: firstly, the consolidation of representative assemblies in the kingdom, known as *Cortes*; secondly, the continuation of the peaceful exterior policy initiated in the previous century. During Juana's reign, Navarre was on a war footing for merely four years, including a two-year war with Castile and the participation of King Philippe in the Algeciras Crusade, which cost him his life.

The fact that the kingdom was not involved in major wars does not mean

that peace reigned supreme. The first half of the 14th century was marked by an increase in frontier incidents and banditry. Incursions across the western border with Guipúzcoa and Álava multiplied. The depredations of bandits were replicated with operations of reprisal which, sometimes, such as in 1321, 1330 and 1332, were veritable military operations. These years witnessed private clashes between noble families in Basse Navarre (Díaz de Durana and Fernández de Larrea 2005: 171–205).

The reign of the dynamic and ambitious Charles II was a new turning point in the kingdom's military policy. Without neglecting his interests as a French prince, Charles II was more assiduous in the Iberian Peninsula than his predecessors, and summoned the aid of his Navarrese subjects for his wars in the continent.

Charles II (1349–1387) started as a lieutenant in Languedoc for his father-in-law Jean II in 1351. They soon clashed, and court rivalries and the reluctance of Jean II of France to pay his daughter's dowry led to the arrest of the Navarrese king and the beginning of hostilities on the part of his vassals in Normandy and Navarre (1355 and 1356–1359). All this was taking place against the agitated backdrop of the early stages of the Hundred Years' War and the great peasant revolt of the *Jacquerie*. After his liberation, Charles II fought both France and the peasants, the main army of which he decimated. In the midst of this confusing scenario, the king was well served by several thousand Navarrese combatants, who marched to Normandy in support of their lord.

In the Iberian Peninsula, Charles II participated in the conflicts that emerged around Pedro I of Castile. Navarre fought as an ally of Castile against Aragon (1362– 1363), supported the restoration of the deposed Pedro I, and tried to take advantage of the confusion by retaking the old possessions of Álava, Guipúzcoa and Logroño (1368–1373). The Navarrese soldiers also fought farther afield. A force sent in 1376 to help *Infante* Louis to invade Albania ended up conquering the Greek Peloponnese after his death.

Despite the exertions of the king and his subjects, the war was not going well for Navarre. The alliance between Castile and France was too strong and the king's Normandy positions fell in 1378, except Cherbourg, which was ceded to England for their help against Castile. Even with English help, the Navarrese forces collapsed in 1379 when the kingdom's finances gave way under the strain of the conflict.

The second half of the 14th century, especially Charles II's reign, saw the climax of Navarre's military activity in the Late Middle Ages. Navarre was on a war footing for 35 of the 50 years that spanned the second half of the century, including several major campaigns against France, Castile and Aragon.

Although Charles III's (1387–1425) exterior policy was considerably more

peaceful, his reign was not totally free from military activity. Firstly, the relaxation of the conflict abroad revived the ghost of private strife between noble parties. Secondly, the Navarrese monarch scrupulously honoured his duties as an ally, which resulted in the dispatch of small expeditionary forces to aid his associates, and particularly the maintenance of the garrison in the Norman harbour of Cherbourg, won back from the English, between 1393 and 1404.

Charles III was succeeded by his daughter Blanca I (1425–1441), who was married to the *Infante* Juan, son of Fernando I of Aragón and, at the same time, a great lord in Castile. This marriage caused another turn in the military activity in the kingdom. The king consort was an active and long-standing political plotter, dragging Navarre into the most important wars of the 15th century because of his rivalry with Juan II of Castile. In the 50 years that made up the first half of the century, Navarre was at war for 23, not a negligible figure.

Juan II's influence was even more important after Blanca I's death. Although the throne belonged to Juan and Blanca's son, Carlos, Prince of Viana, the queen asked the young man not to take the throne without his father's consent. Carlos ruled in Navarre while his father operated in Castile and in Aragon (Juan inherited the throne in 1458), but he made a poor job of ruling. In contrast with his predecessors, Carlos could not maintain the balance between the noble families. The prince favoured some families to the detriment of others and even alienated several cities. When Juan II returned to Navarre in 1450, he lent his full support to those whom his son had wronged. The chasm between father and son was confirmed in July 1450.

Carlos confronted his father with the support of some nobles, the so-called *bea-monteses* (see Glossary), and from Castile. Juan II, for his part, had the support of the *agramonteses* (see Glossary) and his brother the King of Aragon. At first the war went Juan's way, when his troops won the Battle of Aibar (1451) and captured the prince.

But the fracture of the kingdom went far beyond dynastic problems. The irreconcilable rivalry between families on both sides shook the kingdom periodically, and the situation was made worse by the intervention of neighbouring powers. One of the consequences of this international projection of the conflict was the Castilian capture of Sonsierra and other enclaves in the south-west. Although discontinuous, conflict persisted, sometimes in extremely violent episodes. The assassination of the Bishop of Pamplona in 1468 and the assault and sack of the city of Olite in 1495 were some examples of such events, one of the victims of which being the infamous Cesare Borgia in 1507.

The death of Prince Carlos in 1463 and that of his father Juan II in 1479 did

not end the conflict. The new Foix-Albret dynasty had hopeful beginnings, but this also ended in fiasco. The ambition of the *beamonteses* and the scheming of Fernando I of Aragon and V of Castile – son of Juan II's second marriage – converged to propitiate the Castilian conquest of Navarre in 1512 (Lacarra 1973: vol. 3).

Recruitment and organization of the armies

Military obligations and recruitment methods

During the first half of the 14th century, the traditional recruitment procedures remained in place, but military drafts were uncommon and troops were only used for defensive purposes. The turning point was 1351, with the kingdom's participation in Charles II's conflicts for and against France. After that year, conscription was rarely used, and exemption mechanisms were easy to trigger. *Caballerías* (see Glossary) and *mesnadas* (see Glossary) underwent a similar evolution. During the central years of the 14th century, money fiefs had become one of the many rewards that the king conferred upon nobles as a reward for their services; that is, although the notion that whoever received a royal rent was obliged to serve the king in case of need, this service was no longer necessarily considered to be military in nature, and even less quantifiable in any precise way.

FIGURE 5.7 Map of the Kingdom of Navarre c.1400 (Díaz de Durana, J. R. and Fernández de Larrea, J. A., 'La frontera de los malhechores: bandidos, linajes y villas entre Álava, Guipúzcoa y Navarra durante la Baja Edad Media', *Studia Historica. Historia Medieval*, 23, 171–205, 2005)

From 1351 onwards, although the idea that Navarrese could be compelled to fight for the king did not completely vanish, in practice armies became increasingly professionalized and were largely composed of paid volunteers. If necessary, these voluntary troops would be complemented by hiring mercenaries. In 1351, during the Hundred Years' War, Charles II's father-in-law, Jean II of France, as we saw above, appointed him lieutenant in Languedoc. In preparation for his operations against the English in Gascony, the Navarrese king decided to recruit troops in his own kingdom, but instead of using the traditional means, he recruited professionals; that is, he only took on volunteers and paid them for their services. Two years later he adopted the same policy when he instructed his agents in Navarre to recruit professional troops to man his fortresses in northern France. Some captains were still expected to recruit a certain number of men, but a general call for volunteers was made, which was a great success, and the number of recruits exceeded requirements. The mobilizations of 1355 and 1357, when Navarrese forces were again needed in Normandy, followed the same pattern. The largely voluntary

and, above all, paid, nature of drafts, forced the king to bargain with the troops, because sometimes some of the men were not satisfied with the conditions offered by the king, such as was the case in 1357. The Navarrese recruitment model was closer to the French *lettres de retenue* and the Aragonese *acorriments* than to the English *indentures* or the Italian *condotta*; it was not particularly detailed, and the duration and the conditions of the service were not specified. On some occasions, for example in 1364, enlistment was encouraged by the offer of bonuses or up-front payments. Sometimes, the captains of a given force were entrusted with, or authorized to enlist as many men as they could.

In 1442–1444, the Navarrese military system evolved once more to adopt a model similar to that implemented by the Aragonese, but also to the French standing-army. Until then, Navarrese companies had combined men-at-arms, infantrymen and, occasionally, other troops (*pillarts*, archers, mounted crossbowmen) in single units, but in 1444 the nobility was charged with enlisting only men-at-arms, while the drafting of infantrymen was left to the villages, lands and valleys of the kingdom. In addition, between December 1442 and January 1443, Charles, Prince of Viana and lieutenant of the king, organized – following the king's orders – a troop of 224 lances attached to his household and assigned them an annual pension. In October 1443, the prince instructed the king's treasurer to deliver the monthly wages for a force of 203 lances. Unfortunately, the treasurer's account books for 1443 and 1445–1453 have not survived, but it is to be assumed that the reform – already interrupted by the war with Castile in 1444 – was aborted as a consequence of the terrible conflict between the *agramonteses* and *beamonteses*, which broke out in 1450 and flared intermittently until the Castilian conquest.

Compared to its direct rivals, especially Castile and France, Navarre's population was small, which made the enrolment of mercenaries or foreign volunteers, whose pay was sometimes higher than that of the Navarrese troops, imperative. Navarre had to resort to this expedient during the wars with France in 1355–1359 and 1364–1365, and Castile in 1378–1379. In this last conflict with Castile, the Navarrese army included as many as 858 soldiers from England, Gascony and Béarn, mostly cavalry and a few archers.

The kings of Navarre did not organize a specific *garde du corps* during the Late Middle Ages. Very occasionally, a few dozen men-at-arms (1378) or a company of mountain highlanders from the Roncal Valley (1429–1430), were temporarily entrusted with the duty of protecting the king (Fernández de Larrea 2013: 63–103).

Composition of the armies

The introduction of pay and regular accounting systems in the 14th century gives a very clear idea of the composition of Navarrese armies in the closing centuries of the Middle Ages. Navarre is largely dominated by rugged and mountainous territory, an ideal source for hard and bellicose infantrymen, among which some members of the lesser nobility could be found.

During the 14th and the 15th centuries, Navarre was able to recruit, without too much trouble, between 1,000 and 2,300 men, and very seldom over 3,000. Of these, between one third and one fourth were men-at-arms, and the rest were infantrymen and a handful of artillery specialists. The high proportion of infantry was not detrimental to the Navarrese forces. For one, the Navarrese did a good deal of their fighting in mountainous territory, and Navarrese infantry – partially drafted from the kingdom's lesser nobility – were among the most effective and feared in the Iberian Peninsula. Narrative sources describe infantrymen recruited in the Cantabrian Mountains and the Pyrenees, men who were hardened in the course of frequent private and frontier wars, as solid and very aggressive in combat (Fernández de Larrea 2013: 63–115).

Castle garrisons and tenancies

The tenancy systems for castles did not undergo any significant changes with the arrival of the house of Champagne to the throne. Garrisons remained small and were only reinforced in emergencies. Castles that were part of the defensive structures of small towns, for instance in Bernedo and Labraza, were sometimes entrusted to the inhabitants of the town.

Chain of command

The king was still the commander in chief of the army and some monarchs – Charles II, Juan II and Prince Charles of Viana – led their forces in the field. Charles II's brothers, the *Infantes* Louis and Philippe, also showed their military abilities in the French wars. The position of *alférez*, second in command, which was traditional in the Iberian Peninsula, was replaced in 1432 with that of *condestable*, whose functions were identical.

From the mid-14th century, marshals begin featuring in the records. In this period, an English model was adopted: marshals were appointed only occasionally and only for one campaign. Their tasks appear to have been

largely administrative, but they also sometimes seemed to command troops in the field. From 1393 onwards, Navarrese marshals followed the French model.

Operations were often directed by temporary officers, appointed for the duration of the campaigns and called lieutenants, captain generals or captains in France and in Normandy. One of the most significant examples is that of Jean de Grailly, *captal* of Buch, in 1364. When operations took place in the Iberian Peninsula, each of the kingdom's administrative divisions – *merindades* – was entrusted to a captain while operations lasted. Under these, the defence of cities was entrusted to lesser captains. Finally, another type of captain was in charge of recruiting the companies of armed men for the army (Fernández de Larrea 2013: 35–40).

Military operations

Owing to the involvement of Navarre in the Hundred Years' War and in several conflicts in the Iberian Peninsula, there is a lot more information about the tactics of Navarrese armies during this period, except for sieges, for which there is very little descriptive evidence. However, written records attest to the use of siege engines in the 14th century and the progressive adoption of artillery after 1378.

The use of English and Gascon mercenaries in the second half of the 14th century had a considerable tactical and strategic impact on Navarre's military practices. The favourite strategy during this period was a war of attrition, destroying the enemy's resources and striking occasionally to take fortified enclaves. These conquered fortresses were immediately turned into bases from which to launch renewed raids against the enemy's economic base. In cooperation with the English, Navarrese troops launched several long *chevauchées*, for example in 1356, under the command of the Duke of Lancaster and the *Infante* Philippe.

In the course of these operations, which were undertaken in France or in the Iberian Peninsula, combats were common, but they are seldom described in the sources. Sometimes, battle accounts describe surprise attacks upon the enemy, for example in Mauconseil in 1358. In a few instances the sources are much more detailed and the tactics are described step by step, but whenever this happens we generally find the Navarrese army inserted within a much larger body of troops, such as in Nájera in 1367.

The only 'truly Navarrese' battle that we know in detail is the Battle of Cocherel, on 16 May 1364. That day, a Navarrese army led by the *captal* of Buch and composed of English mercenaries and Norman and Navarrese

vassals of Charles II was defeated by the French and Bretton forces of Bertrand du Guesclin, who also had the support of a few Gascon troops. The order of battle and choice of ground reveals the strong influence of English tactics. The Navarrese army deployed on high ground and dismounted in order to fight a defensive battle on foot. The army was formed into three bodies: one with the men-at-arms and English archers of John Jouel; another, led by the *captal*, formed by 400 men-at-arms; and the third composed of the Norman vassals, also 400 men-at-arms on foot. The French lured the Navarrese army into abandoning their defensive position by feigning a retreat. The English did not keep discipline and broke the line to pursue, dragging the rest of the army with them, which did not want to lose cohesion. But this was merely a ruse, and du Guesclin's forces turned on their heels and defeated the Navarrese troops in the plain.

Logistics

In the two last centuries of the Middle Ages, the combatants were still responsible for their own armaments, mounts and supplies for both men and beasts. As such, it is unsurprising that the public records of the kingdom are almost entirely silent on the matter. However, the accounts of the campaign undertaken in Guipúzcoa in the autumn of 1368 indicate that troops were followed in the field by an army of merchants and merchandise-laden mules. They sold wheat, barley and wine, and on this occasion King Charles II imposed a price cap. Business must have been good, because we know that the following year two merchants from Estella were fined for selling supplies to Hugh Calveley's mercenaries, who had taken Puente la Reina.

In some cases, this practice led to supply problems, and practical solutions were sought. We know, for instance, that between 1393 and 1399 some members of the Cherbourg garrison agreed to give Martín Enríquez de Lacarra, Marshall of Navarre and captain of the town, two-thirds of their salary in exchange for supplies of food and drink.

In the war against Castile in 1429–1430, the Navarrese army tried to institute a centralized supply system for the first time. Rations of meat, wheat and wine, for the men, and barley for the mounts, were thus established. Each day, every contingent of 20 men would receive 22 kilogrammes of wheat and a ram – or an equivalent amount of beef – while every contingent of eight soldiers would be given 11.77 litres of wine. Each mount was fed with 6.75 kilogrammes of barley per day. The distribution of these provisions was entrusted to the already overworked royal tax collectors and the local

authorities. The system did not always work well and was open to malpractice, because the troops were quick to appropriate the peasant's provisions when the distribution was delayed (Fernández de Larrea 2013: 129–143).

The compensation paid by the Crown to the heirs of Juan López de Urroz, *merino* (see Glossary) of Pamplona, also for once provide some information about the logistics of supplying a company. Urroz was defeated and killed in a battle with Guipúzcoa in 1321. He led ten men-at-arms and 160 infantrymen. The unit's supplies were carried by 44 mules, four of which were the property of the *merino* and the rest were provided by the locals. The provisions listed included 2,244 kilogrammes of bread and 1,412.4 litres of wine, 25 pieces of bacon and the meat of four oxen and 25 sheep. The fodder for the mounts amounted to 2,520 kilogrammes of barley (Fernández de Larrea 2012: 1287–1294).

The kingdom of Navarre was landlocked from 1200 onwards. Charles II and Charles III had to negotiate with ship owners in San Sebastián and Fuenterrabía (in Guipúzcoa, Kingdom of Castile) and Bayonne (in Gascony under English sovereignty) to transport troops to Cherbourg, in Normandy.

Armament

The individual weapons used by Navarrese fighters continued to follow continental trends. Imports of French weapons and armours are attested, as well as the arrival in the kingdom of Gascon and French armourers, attracted by public incentives. These artisans joined the prosperous arms sector in Navarre, the main centres of which were Pamplona, Olite and Tudela. The iron used by these industrial centres came from the iron furnaces in the north-west. From the early 14th century, we have iconographic and very detailed written descriptions.

One of the most significant transformations in individual armament was the progressive complementation or substitution of the defensive elements of mail coats for plate armour. Iconographic and textual information confirm that, by the 1320s, plate armour covered the entire legs, and sometimes other body parts as well. By the 1340s plate had extended to the arms. From at least the 1350s, coats of plates and gauntlets were in use. The earliest breastplates appear in the 1370s. Concerning headgear, great helms and kettle hats lost ground to bascinets with camail, which had become the norm in the 1350s. Therefore, by the late 14th century, Navarrese men-at-arms were near fully protected by plate armour, wearing mail only around the abdomen. The evolution of offensive weapons also followed wider European trends

(Fernández de Larrea 2012: 1287–1294).

Infantrymen used a simplified version of these innovations. Generally, infantrymen only wore protection in the torso and the head. Mail hauberks survived for longer among infantrymen and coexisted with coats of plate in the 14th century. The early 15th century witnessed the arrival of the jack of plates and the 1440s the occasional use of breastplates by infantrymen. Concerning offensive weapons, Navarrese men were famous for their ability to handle a local model of javelin, known as *azkona*. The inhabitants of certain mountain valleys such as Roncal were expert crossbowmen.

One of the key facts in the evolution of military equipment in this period was the adoption of gunpowder and artillery. In Navarre, cannons arrived later than in other regions, and the earliest cannons were not bought or made until 1378, both in Cherbourg and in the kingdom of Navarre itself. Navarrese artillery was developed by Gascon gunmakers who came to Navarre, but the locals soon mastered the techniques. It seems that the Crown did not fully understand the revolutionary nature of this innovation, and cannons were only made or bought under pressure when circumstances so required. Therefore, the most active periods in this regard were the 1378–1379 and 1429–1430 wars with Castile. Our information concerning the adoption of handguns is scarce and unreliable (Fernández de Larrea 2015: 73–81).

FIGURE 5.8 Relief in the Church of the Assumption, Tuesta. (Author's collection)

Fortifications

Castles in this period did not undergo significant changes. The most important transformations took place after the Castilian conquest (1512–1521) when fortresses started to need to adapt to modern artillery trains. Some of the old fortresses had started to become obsolete even sooner. During the Castilian wars in 1378–1379 and 1429–1430 several small castles easily fell to the enemy. After the conflicts these castles were not rebuilt and no more *alcaides* were appointed for them. In this period, defensive efforts concentrated on castles attached to urban fortifications (Martinena 1994).

From a structural point of view, we may highlight the castle of the Peralta family in Marcilla, one of the few fortifications built during the period. Construction began around 1425, and the upper bodies of walls and towers were entirely built with brick, stone being used only in the foundations and the lower structures (Martinena 1980: 29–30 and 38).

Cultural aspects

A couple of inventories provide a glimpse of the cultural world of the Navarrean nobles in the Late Middle Ages, especially concerning their relationship with war. On his death in 1393, Pierre de Lasaga owned five books, all of which dealt with fiction: two romances of Lancelot, *The Book of Alexander*, an anthology of fables attributed to Aesop, and the *Romance of Ratabon and Saint Elizabeth*.

A century later, in 1495, the library owned by the lord of Ezpeleta in Olite was robbed. Some of his seven books were of a military nature, including Honoré Bonet's *Tree of Battles*, Quintus Curtius's *Histories of Alexander the Great*, Alonso de Cartagena's *Doctrinal de caballeros* and King Alfonso X's *Segunda Partida*. The other books were about falconry, works by Seneca, and Juan de Lucena's *Libro de Vita Beata*.

Following the example set by other kings in this period, Charles III created an order of chivalry to celebrate his coronation in 1391. The order was called 'The Bonne Foy Necklace', or the 'White Greyhound'. Little is known about this order, or if it stayed active after the death of the king.

Main campaigns: selection of a representative campaign

The war waged by Navarre and Aragón against Castile between July 1429 and July 1430 has been selected since, for once, Castilian sources paid some attention to the events on the Navarre front. In addition, the Navarrese forces played a very significant role in the coalition's defensive strategy, including sharp counterattacks, which faithfully represents the kingdom's general strategy in the Late Middle Ages.

Castile had the numerical advantage. Alfaro, south of the Ebro, witnessed the muster of 600 lances and 1,000 infantrymen, and Ágreda was the rallying point for another 300 men-at-arms and 600 infantrymen. We do not know the number of troops north of the river – in Álava and Guipúzcoa – but recruitment officers drafted 3,000 men from Vizcaya alone. The forces that Navarre were able to raise by January 1430 were a mere 711 men-at-arms and 1,512 infantry, a total of 2,243 men.

The Castilians began operations in the region of the Sonsierra – where they took the small castle of Asa – before attacking the city of San Vicente de la Sonsierra. The assailants entered the town, but became disorganized during the sack, and the Navarrese took the chance to reorganize and counterattack, expelling the Castilian forces and inflicting heavy casualties in terms of mortalities and prisoners taken. In their retreat, the Castilians were pushed to the other side of the Ebro. Meanwhile, on the border of Guipúzcoa, the Castilian forces were unsuccessful in their attack on Huarte-Arakil, which had received Navarrese reinforcements. These Navarrese troops defeated the invaders in combat at Lekunberri on 11 August, although they suffered heavily.

The arrival of the autumn did not bring operations to an end. The forces of the King of Navarre carried two incursions into Castile, with varying success. The household of Juan II – with men recruited in Castile – suffered a heavy setback near Labastida, north of the Ebro. A few days later, another Navarrese contingent advanced towards Ágreda and at Araviana routed the Castilians in battle on 11 November.

Operations continued into the autumn and winter. In early 1430, a Castilian force took the city of Laguardia, in the Sonsierra, by surprise. However, the Navarrese managed to defend themselves in the castle. This led to an *impasse* in which both forces fought for the space between the church, which had been fortified by the Castilians, and the castle, occupied by the Navarrese. The deadlock went on like this for a while, until the shortage of food forced the Navarrese to agree to surrender the castle if reinforcements sent by their king did not arrive. During the truce, the Navarrese dug a secret tunnel and, on arrival of the reinforcements, announced the end of the truce and tried to take

the besiegers by surprise by coming out of the tunnel at the square. After a hard-fought combat, the Navarrese were defeated and forced to seek protection in the castle again. The Castilians renewed their attack, now using artillery and crossbows. Confronted by this new situation and the fiasco of the relief operation, the Navarrese abandoned the castle.

The fall of Laguardia led to the fortification and garrisoning of the churches in five nearby hamlets. The signing of a truce on 16 July was not followed by total demobilization, and the Navarrese maintained garrisons in San Vicente and Briones for a considerable period of time.

In addition to the operations undertaken by the professional soldiers, there was a guerrilla war fought by the inhabitants of the frontier areas. When Juan II tried to collect the fifth of the booty obtained by his companies, the troops rejected the idea outright, but the royal tax collectors were able to exact payment from a surprising number of people who, despite not being officially in the military muster, had not hesitated to go across the Ebro river, plunder Castilian livestock and even take some prisoners, for whom ransoms were paid.

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6
Portugal

I Early and High Middle Ages, 1096–1249

José Varandas

Political and military outline

Portugal: from earldom to kingdom (1096–1239)

The Christian kingdom of Afonso VI was based on a defensive system in which the key strongholds were: Santarém, Coria, Toledo, Valencia and Aledo. Except for Toledo, all the other cities fell into the hands of the Almoravids. Clearly, Leon's war effort in the Iberian central zone could not hold back Islam. The military situation in the West of the Peninsula, an area controlled by count Raymond of Burgundy, was not favourable, either.

In the summer or autumn of 1096, Henrique of Burgundy (married to princess Teresa, illegitimate daughter of the king Afonso VI), owned the territory which included the old counties of Portucale and Coimbra. Between the rivers Minho and Mondego, a politically united territory, separated from Galicia, was thus created. The relationship between those counties was already very strong and this unification made it even more solid and coherent. In the mid-11th century, the clash between old *portucalense* county families and the less pre-eminent new noblemen (*infanções*) reached a crucial point. The deterioration of the most prestigious lineages was taken advantage of and exploited by the new noblemen of Portucale and Coimbra, enriched due to raids against the Moors, which paved the way for them to take over political control as well as to conduct the war against Islam. Count Henrique found the necessary support to protect the southern frontier among these noblemen (Barbosa 2008).

Henrique proved to be a fearless warrior and a good strategist, as demonstrated by the defence at Santarém. This city was constantly harassed by

the Almoravids and was only lost in 1111. His military participation is documented in the Battle of Malagon in 1100 and in the Battle of Vatalandi in 1103. In parallel with his military activity, Henrique was a zealous administrator of the earldom. His action materialized in a set of measures ranging from the concession of municipal charters to direct intervention in ecclesiastical matters. Henrique also incremented the process leading to the propagation of the seigneurial regime resulting in the exercise of public activity by private entities, in territories taken away from the regal administration.

Henrique was a fierce supporter of the Gregorian Reforms which benefited the bishop and monasteries which were in favour of the Roman liturgy. He contributed to the development of the seigneurial regime in the old *portucalense* territory whereas in the southern lands he fostered municipal structures. All things considered, the war against Islam was a powerful cohesive factor for the county. Both the North and South committed to a common undertaking.

When Teresa of Portugal took over the county government in 1112, the situation was very chaotic all over the Christian north. Several parties were fighting each other with the purpose of placing their candidate in charge of the kingdom of Castile and Leon. At the same time, the Muslims were exerting pressure along the border lines. In this context, the aristocracy of Entre-Douro-e-Minho had developed a political conscience, eager to keep its autonomy and the privileges acquired during Henrique's government, and did not appreciate Teresa's link to the Trava Galician noble family. The county was heading towards being reintegrated into the Galician realm. During the autumn of 1127, the government north of Douro River was entrusted to the young prince Afonso Henriques, already an armed knight at this point. Several local barons stood by his side, and on 24 July 1128, at the Saint Mamede fields, the *Portucalense* forces fought and defeated Teresa's army.

Portuguese offensive: from the Mondego to the Tagus River (1131–1147)

The victory at Saint Mamede caused a change in the leadership of the *portucalense* land. The Minho aristocracy placed the rule of the county in the hands of the prince Afonso Henriques by force. The *Portucalense* barons wanted to restore the previous political situation. However, Afonso pursued an opposing objective. Long before receiving the title of king (1139–1140), he had already displayed strong regal authority. All available documents refer to him

as an *Infante* or a prince, never as a count. He claimed a much higher level of nobility for himself when compared to the noblemen he commanded.

In November 1130, Afonso's mother Teresa died and with her the last legal hurdle to Afonso's sovereignty. The Galician Trava family's legitimacy to rule was reduced to dust and the Prince took advantage of the permanent conflicts between the Galician aristocracy. The Galician earls from Toronho and Límia recognized his authority and the Celmes castle was built. This warrior stance challenged the king of Leon and the powerful archbishop of Compostela who fought back and destroyed the castle, restoring the power of Leon in the region. While Alfonso VII, king of Leon, arbitrated the conflict between Navarre and Aragon, Afonso of Portugal invaded Galicia and defeated the Trava forces in the Battle of Cerneja (Límia). This was an outrage to the emperor who decided to summon Afonso Henriques to a meeting on 4 July 1137, in the city of Tui, where they signed a peace agreement. Afonso recognized Leon's sovereignty but this treaty did not prevent the Prince from wishing to possess Galician territories. At the beginning of 1141, the Portuguese armies faced the forces of Leon at Valdevez. Everything ended in a new treaty in which all the lands previously taken from each side were thereby restored.

After the Galician border situation became peaceful, the Prince's eyes turned south. In 1131, he established his headquarters in Coimbra, a key decision which incremented the strength of Portugal's national independence. Freed from a space contaminated by a seigneurial system, in Coimbra he was able to exercise the public authority inherent to his regal prerogatives. The strengthening of military and political power was based on the warlike capacities of the municipal armies and the northern knights from Minho, second sons who could not inherit and therefore who searched for prestige and wealth in the southern territories.

In 1135, using Leiria castle as his base, he commanded the occupation of the lands between Soure and Penela. The main objective was the strengthening of the line of the River Mondego, in which the castle of Soure, donated to the Templars in 1129 or 1130, played a key role (Varandas 2010). The Prince himself led several missions against the Moors, such as the foray in 1136–1137. He consolidated the new territory with the creation of several new municipalities (Miranda do Corvo, 1136) and the construction of new castles: Germanelo, Alvorge and Ansião, in 1142 (Barroca 1991). To put an end to the Muslim raids on the region of Coimbra he had to take the cities of Santarém and Lisbon, from which the Moors departed for each incursion. These two cities were conquered in 1147. A few years previously, Afonso Henriques had already won a battle at the core of the enemy's heart, in a long military expedition (*fossado*), which is known as the victory of Ourique (Martins 2011).

At the same time as carrying out these conquests, Afonso of Portugal further developed his administration and the settlement over the new territory which was expanding. However, his great concern was still the war against the Muslims. Military actions were crucial for the Prince's political agenda. Nevertheless, these military dynamics had their consequences. The need to stabilize and consolidate borders and settlements fostered a strong re-populating activity. To consolidate the River Mondego border and to launch the Christian advance over the Tagus, the future Afonso I of Portugal granted a considerable number of municipal charters between 1127 and 1151. His intentions were to attract settlers to the dangerous border territories and, at the same time, engage those municipal communities in the military process (Mattoso 2006).

The conquest of Lisbon (1147)

In July 1147, Afonso's war host was approaching from the north of the Muslim city of Lisbon. At a distance, a fleet of Crusaders, arriving from northern Europe, entered the Tagus and anchored. The city was getting ready for a lengthy siege that would last until 21 October. This was the second time that Afonso of Portugal had tried to conquer Lisbon. In 1142, despite having 80 Christian ships, the military expedition failed. The conditions were different this time. The Crusader fleet was stronger; the Portuguese warriors were more determined and the Muslims were more weakened and divided. Lisbon was the Second Crusade's sole success (Barbosa 2004).

On 19 May, the first contingents of English, Scottish, Flemish, Breton, Norman and Cologne crusaders set sail from Dartmouth aboard approximately 164 ships. No king commanded them. Arnold III of Aershot, Christian of Ghistelles, Henry Glanville, Simon of Dover, Andrew of London and Saher of Archelles were the captains of the expedition.

On 16 June, the fleet anchored in Oporto and listened to the bishop, Pedro Pitões, who on behalf of Afonso Henriques requested their help for the military operation against Lisbon. The timing was appropriate, as the Portuguese had just taken over Santarém and could move forward south without any opposition.

The two forces (ground and naval) prepared the siege of the city. The Portuguese vanguard won the first skirmishes, in the western suburbs of Lisbon. Afonso set up his base camp on the Sant'Ana hill, overlooking what is now called the Martim Moniz square. The position was excellent. It had good natural defences, with two water lines and an open escape pathway to the

north. From there, the Portuguese had an excellent overview of the enemy's movements. The Moorish defence was resilient, the fighting fierce, but the Christian siege imposed itself on the large city. Since Lisbon was part of the *taifa* of Badajoz, a warrior fleet was expected in its harbour. However, when the Crusaders arrived, no Muslim ship attacked and the coastal towers did not prevent the landing. The city had protected itself with strong walls, towers and suburban defences. The population was numerous and the garrison was strong, approximately 15,000 people, according to Christian sources, plus a militia recruited in the city. The Christian reports also refer to the presence of several *ballistae* in the city towers (Barbosa 2014).

During the first days of July, the Christian assault began. Stones and other projectiles were hurled at the walls, causing the initial destruction of structures and casualties amongst the defenders. Resistance weakened, food became scarce and reinforcements had not arrived. Christian attacks unfolded throughout the months of August and September.

On 16 October the final attack on the walls began on two fronts, to the west by the British and the Normans, and to the east by the Flemings and the troops from Cologne. Between 17 and 21 October, the eastern wall collapsed, next to the *Portas do Sol*. The door, later called Martim Moniz's door, was taken by Portuguese forces.

The Crusaders gathered for Mass before the final assault on 19 October. They moved a siege tower that tried to lean against the *Torre da Escrivaninha* (the Tower of the Desk). The enemy concentrated many troops there, so they moved it near to one of the doors that gave access to the Tagus (nowadays the *Arco Escuro* – the Dark Arch). From the top of the tower, English archers and crossbowmen threw their projectiles over the defenders, who withdrew. The Moors suddenly rushed forward to attack the siege tower. The tower resisted and the Moors were forced to retreat, after a counterattack by the Crusaders.

On 21 October, the Christian siege tower reached and leaned against the walls. Out of it came warriors who occupied the parapets and took control of the wall. Resistance collapsed. The Moors laid their arms down and asked for a truce, which was granted. Fernão Peres Cativo, Afonso Henriques's lieutenant (*alferes*) and Hervé de Glanville, representing the Crusaders, negotiated the truce for the Christian side.

On 24 October, the Christians seized Lisbon. On the following day, Afonso solemnly entered the city, going from Alfama to the Cathedral (the Mosque at the time) and moved forward to the Castle. Lisbon had become Portuguese.

The Christian thrust continued southwards, towards the River Sado. Almada had been taken in September, in a landing operation carried out by crusader ships. Palmela was taken in October. In 1151, Portuguese forces failed to capture Alcácer-do-Sal and it would only fall a few years later. In the region,

the entire defensive system of Islam collapsed. Further to the west, in November, the garrison of the castle of Sintra surrendered to the Portuguese leader.

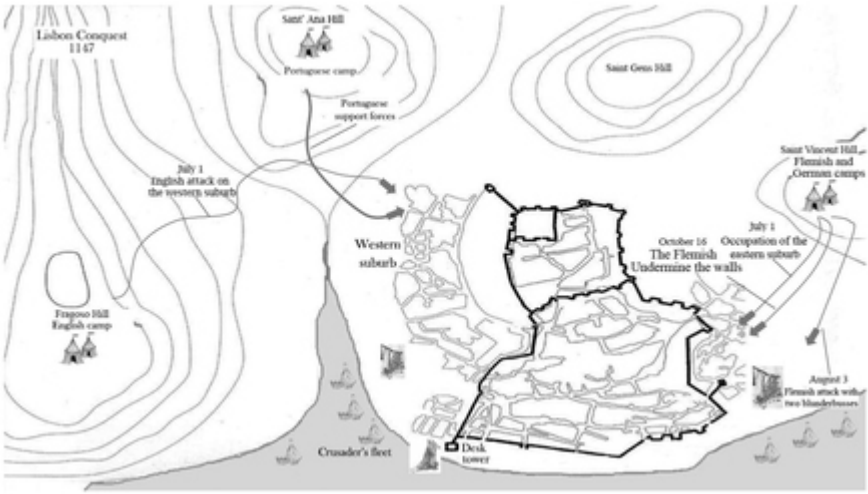

FIGURE 6.1 The conquest of Lisbon: the final assault on 25 October 1147. (Author's drawing adapted from Pedro Gomes Barbosa, *Conquista de Lisboa. 1147. A cidade reconquistada aos mouros*. Lisboa: Tribuna da História, 2004, pp. 70–71)

The conquest between the rivers Tagus and Guadiana (1147–1239)

The advance to the south was relentless. After Almada and Palmela, in 1158 Alcácer do Sal fell, opening access to the Lower Alentejo. With these incursions, the Portuguese king definitively transferred Portugal's border along the Tagus. These borders were further strengthened by means of important donations made to the Templars and the remaining Crusaders. These were important measures, but they did not prevent Almohad power from increasing. Under the command of the chieftain Geraldo Sem-Pavor (*fearless Gerald*), Évora, Moura, Serpa, Alconchel, Juromenha and Christian Leon lands such as Cáceres, Trujillo and Montánchez were taken.

Violent Christian incursions (*fossados*) devastated the lands of the Alentejo. Fortune changed in Badajoz, in 1169: Fernando II of Leon established an alliance with the Muslims preventing Geraldo from taking over the city. Badajoz was under the Leonese sphere of influence and the presence of Portuguese military could have limited his expansionist effort. For the Almohads, there was a very clear need to protect their strategic position on the

banks of the River Guadiana at all costs. The Moroccan emir sent a substantial number of back-up troops. Afonso entered the city trying to help. The Portuguese were surrounded by Leonese troops. Afonso Henriques was seriously injured and accepted the conditions imposed by Leon, losing almost all the strongholds he had conquered in the region. As examples of military policy and re-population, we have the municipal charters granted to the horsemen of Sintra in 1154 and to the city of Évora in 1165. In the latter case, there was a clear intention to favour a castle that would quickly become an indispensable aid for Portuguese advancement in the Guadiana region.

Afonso's actions did not only involve the strengthening of the southern limits of the kingdom. The border with Leon deserved his special attention, particularly because of the increasing aggressiveness of Leon. The Portuguese prince established a closed line of fortifications along the border, preventing Leonese war incursions and preparing for expansion beyond the Côa River. On 23 May 1179, Pope Alexander III, through the bull *Manifestis probatum*, recognized the royal title to the prince and all his descendants. Afonso I of Portugal died on 6 December 1185.

The military leadership of the kingdom was transferred to the hands of Prince Sancho in 1170 (after the disaster of Badajoz) and, despite the increasing Almohad pressure, this Portuguese impetus remained. In 1178, Sancho I commanded an important incursion (*fossado*) over Moorish territory, which took him very close to Seville. He destroyed the outskirts of the city and retired, but he still had enough strength to attack Beja. This was an extremely important campaign, not only as a military action, but also due to the fact that Christians had reached the core of Almohad power (Branco 2006).

The war effort was kept up throughout the next century. From 1224 onwards, Leonese and Castilian forces restarted hostilities against Islam and took Cáceres and Mérida. Not long before this, the Portuguese forces of Sancho II had occupied Beja and Juromenha. They also took Moura and Serpa (1232), Aljustrel (1234), Mértola (1238) and Ayamonte (1239). One of the fundamental objectives was to prevent the access of Muslim forces from the castles below the Guadiana to the fortresses that Islam held in the current Spanish Extremadura.

The Crown acquired the Lower Alentejo and penetrated the eastern Algarve (*Sotavento*), preventing the Moors of Andalusia from assisting the castles of the western Algarve (*Barlavento*) or having access to the plains of Beja and Évora. There was an almost complete paralysis of the military system of the Gharb al-Andalus leaving only some strongholds along the coast which were able to receive supplies and maintain some levels of resistance. However, the land routes that gave access to the north, east and west were patrolled by knights of the military order of Santiago, and in the areas surrounding the

large cities already conquered there were well-equipped and well-motivated municipal militias. Sancho II undid the defences of the Alentejo and isolated the Algarve.

The civil war (1245–1248)

Despite the momentum of conquest that the Portuguese forces imposed on the lands of Islam, from 1245 onwards the kingdom underwent a process of internal chaos that culminated in a civil war between the king's followers and a considerable part of the clergy and some noblemen who supported Afonso, Count of Boulogne-Sur-Mer, brother of the monarch. The flags of this conflict unfurled with the landing of the count in the port of Lisbon. The kingdom had long been preparing for a civil war, and the papal bull deposition precipitated these events. The rebel landing took place in Lisbon at the end of 1245. The rebels had the support of the Lisbon population, which was displeased with both the king and the bishop. The city was a logistical, political and administrative centre which was crucial to the count's ambitions and it was the only place where he could land in the Portuguese kingdom (Varandas 2004).

Military operations were focused on the Atlantic region of Extremadura, mainly in the area between Leiria and Coimbra. Despite the initial advances from Lisbon, Count Afonso forces were blocked in Leiria. In 1246, Afonso took Santarém, Alenquer, Torres Novas, Tomar, Alcobaça and Leiria, and Sancho II's army strengthened its fortifications in Coimbra. From there, royal forces attacked the enemy's supply chains and his progress. There was news that on the Beira frontier the Castilian war hosts were gathering. Following the request of the king of Portugal the monarch of Castile and Leon sent his help. A military corps, commanded by prince Alfonso of Castile, entered Portugal at Ribacôa on 20 December 1246, soon after having taken part in the capture of Jaén. This military corps concentrated on the border and headed for Coimbra. On their way, they took the rebel strongholds of Covilhã and Guarda, where they left their own garrisons. On 13 January 1247, this army defeated the forces of the count of Boulogne after devastating the surroundings of Leiria. The military operations of the Castilian forces continued. The noblemen Fernando Eanes and Rodrigo Froile de Lima invaded the region of Braga and plundered several churches, incurring papal sanctions. The arguments presented by the pontifical curia were significant and compelled Castile to withdraw its forces, taking Sancho II with them and thus avoiding the embarrassment of his capture.

The withdrawal of Castilian forces did not put an end to the civil war. The north of the kingdom remained faithful to the king. In the Beiras, many castles, strengthened with Castilian garrisons, were prepared to resist the advancement of Afonso the *Bolognese* forces. Nevertheless, the cause was lost for the king. Sancho II did not have the support of the high clergy and the nobility, nor of the commercial bourgeoisie and its important resources. The corrosion that the papal decree deposition provoked was tremendous, both in terms of the dynamics of the war as well as in the psychological impact it had on the Portuguese. Sancho II died in Toledo on 4 January 1248.

Recruitment and configuration of military service

The *Reconquista* society completely ignored the organized and permanent military system of the Ancient World. The Roman, Visigoth and Byzantine models adapted poorly to the characteristics of a different way of making war. The Asturian monarchy and the succeeding Christian kingdoms did not possess the economic means to sustain a professional military structure as costly and as complex as a Roman legion. The slow and heavy classic military columns were replaced by a lighter structure, similar to the armies of Islam, wherein the light Berber cavalry emerged as an example to follow. In its first stage, the Christian military system emphasized the use of this cavalry that afforded great mobility. The practice was to carry out fast and surprising raids which were then the basis for further tactical dynamics. These knights almost completely ignored the use of bodily protection, at least until the middle of the 11th century. Due to this reason, these squads whenever possible avoided pitched battles for which they were not properly equipped (Barroca 2003).

Moreover, this was not a permanent, professional structure, but an armed force that was gathered whenever needed. These units were made of two types of combatants: those who practised war professionally, the *bellatores*, and those who formed an awkward group of men obliged to appear whenever the king or lords summoned them. The nobility provided the elite force, making up a wellequipped military, owners of good mounts, well-trained and knowledgeable in tactical affairs. From the 12th century onwards, other professionals also from the nobility joined: the warriors of the military orders. Noblemen and military orders formed the offensive army, the one that together with the *cavalaria-vilã* (villain cavalry, or light horsemen) carried out the *fossado* operations and the conquest of enemy territories.

In addition to these elite units, there was a mass of men who had, depending on the circumstances, to take up arms. They had to possess their own weapons,

according to their social status and their belongings. They were always poorly equipped and poorly trained and they were no good for offensive missions. They defended the fortified settlements and the castles, building the static part of the army, the peonage. The medieval municipal charters (*forais*) established a clear distinction between the villain cavalry that had to participate in the offensive expeditions (*fossados*) and the peonage, who had to stay and defend the strongholds.

Military service was regarded as a duty of free men as well as a privilege. Medieval forces were thus made up of all free and fit men under 60. The monarch summoned the necessary men who lived in the area, or nearby, wherein military movements were to take place, but this calling was not general. This military service consisted of two very specific components: the defensive and the offensive. The defensive process was called *apelido*, derived from the Latin *appelo*, which means 'to call'. The *apelido* was released whenever there was an invasion of the territory by enemy forces, either Muslim or Christian. All capable men, without any exception, had to answer this call, which was made by the land officers in the name of the king. Failure to appear was severely punished and the offender was obliged to pay a severe fine. Some documents indicate the possibility of the offender not having heard the call, or being in the service of the king. Under these conditions, he was exempt from paying a fine. The *apelido* was answered by all: peons, villain cavalry, noble cavalry, members of military orders, and even members of the regular and secular clergy. The duration of this type of service was also peculiar. Many of the municipal charters of northern Portugal, territories far from Muslim incursions, ensured that the inhabitants would only have to respond to the *apelido* if they could return to their homes on the same day. Other municipal charters, after 1224, declared that the inhabitants only had the obligation to go in a *hoste* (a group of armed man) if the king was also participating and if the military action would take place only between the Minho and Douro rivers.

Military expeditions that entered enemy territory were called *fossados* (see Glossary and Chapter 3: *fonsado)*. This is a genuinely medieval designation that goes back to the 10th century and seems to have originated in the earldom of Castile. The origin of this designation is still a mystery. In Portuguese territory, the earliest reference to this type of operation appears in a diploma from the city of Braga dated from 1025. The *fossado* was an expedition organized by or on behalf of the king, although there are indications that other leaders could organize their own expeditions. They were generally land expeditions, but there are references to sea *fossados*, thereby indicating the existence of offensive maritime expeditions. The memory of the constant presence of Muslim and Nordic piracy on the Portuguese coast helps to

understand this scenario quite well.

The *fossado* was a military expedition which was normally organized in the spring or summer. It sought to benefit from the climatic conditions and the availability of fodder in the fields, situations that greatly facilitated the movement of troops and the feeding of the horses. This type of expedition mainly involved cavalry forces, particularly the villain cavalry. The use of this type of force was justified since it was intended to attack Muslim forces by surprise, and for that purpose very swift movement was essential. The Portuguese municipal charters were very clear about the type of forces that were expected for a *fossado*. In many instances the peonage was exempt from going on the *fossados*, assuming only a defensive role. But not all the members of the villain cavalry were in the *fossado*. In general, in the north and centre of the kingdom only a third of that kind of cavalry participated. The other two-thirds stayed in the villages to secure their defence. In the more southern areas the process was reversed, where two-thirds of the horsemen were offensive, leaving a third in defensive process. The necessity of protecting the border with the kingdom of Leon and having to secure large numbers of cavalry in the manoeuvres against Islam justified these procedures. Many municipal charters stipulated the number of knights to be called to arms, such as the charter of Santarém (1179) which required 60 horsemen. This tradition seems to go back to 1147, when 60 knights of Santarém accompanied Afonso Henriques in an attack on Alcácer do Sal. The Portuguese kings were condescending towards the knights who did not want to go to the *fossado* and accepted various reasons to justify their absence. The knights only had to prove that either they had been married for less than a year, or their wife was ill, or if they were a widower, or otherwise that their horse was sick. Others were exempted from this service because their localities were near to the Leon border.

The summoned knights who did not participate in the expeditions had to pay the monarch the *fossadeira*, a monetary contribution that penalized those who did not appear for the offensive military service. The fact that the villages of the north were distant from the borders with Muslim territories meant that the payment of the fine fell on property, whereas in the southern lands the *fossadeira* was regularly applied to those who, without any justification, ran away from military duties.

The participation in offensive expeditions was rewarded with the right to plunder which was divided according to well-defined rules. The plunder was divided into five equal parts, four of them for the military and the fifth part for the king. The profits of the *fossado* were regularly mentioned in the municipal charters of the kingdom. In Coimbra's charter (1111), the king also had the right to one fifth of the plunder; the *azaga*, or rearguard, was awarded two-

fifths and the inhabitants of the city that participated in the *fossado* shared the other two parts between them. Such a division of the captured booty encouraged the populations to participate in these aggressive but very dangerous expeditions.

Offensive military expeditions have had other names besides the term *fossado*. The terms *algara*, *azaria*, *cavalgada* and *almofala* defined nuances of this process of rapid and mobile military action on the enemy. *Azaria* defined a peculiar kind of action: it was applied to raids made by local groups, spontaneously, and without any coordination from the monarch. The *cavalgada* (cavalcade) consisted of a predatory incursion that only made use of cavalry (villain and noble). This reality may lead us to assume that in the *fossados* there could be some support from infantry forces.

There were other mandatory activities of a military nature for those who did not participate in war expeditions. All those who were not noble but were fit for military service had to assist in the tasks of building and maintaining the military structures of their land. This was the so-called *anúduva*. This contribution, which formerly designated military service on horseback in the border areas, was characterized in Portugal by this other activity of repairing and building fortifications and the term was defined during the reign of Sancho II (1223–1248).

Another very important need of the *Reconquista* system was the constant surveillance of the vast regions that were exposed to the enemy's action, and this took on a decisive strategic importance. A very large set of documents indicates the care and attention given to the observation system. Expressions such as *ronda*, *vela* and *vigia*, or military-type place names such as *atalaia* (watchtower), *faro* (lighthouse), *facho*, *esculcas*, *almenaras*, clearly reveal the importance given to surveillance.

The host of war

The forces called upon by the kings of Portugal until 1248 could gather military contingents of various sources and with highly differentiated dimensions and equipment. The smallest group was, however, the most professional, namely the monarch's personal guard, an authentic *schola*. This group was joined by the forces of noblemen (*mesnadas*). The great lords brought their war groups, composed of family members and vassals of lower-status lineages, often referred to as 'knights of a shield and a spear'. Little is known about the size of these groups of knights or about the processes of their creation, training and combat. They are very scarce in the existing documentation, but there are

some studies that attest to their importance and which also refer to the presence of foot soldiers in these entourages (Barroca 2003).

The fighting noblemen were paid by the Crown for the military services rendered. The king paid mostly in the form of lands (*préstamos*), but also in stipends (*soldadas*), or both. From that amount or from the revenues of those *préstamos*, each noble leader had to support his war group, formed by individuals tied to him by bonds of fidelity.

Beyond the nobility other social groups were distinguished by the way they performed military service. The richest men served on horseback and formed the villain cavalry. The less wealthy, who did not have the resources for a horse and specific military equipment, served in the infantry. This division clearly demonstrates the importance given to war as a definer of society in this period. Municipal knights were free men who, though they did not belong to the blood nobility, possessed a horse and suitable weapons for mounted warfare. They had to present minimum armaments: hauberk, iron cap, shield, lance/spear, javelin as well as a sword. In the definition of his military and social condition, having a horse was fundamental. In the charters of many municipalities, a knight who would lose his horse in combat had about one year to present himself with a new mount, without losing the right to his status. All services due to the king, all the equipment and the maintenance of a horse was paid with their own resources. The king paid no fixed stipend to this type of knight but they enjoyed some fiscal and social privileges, such as exemption of payment of tolls and the *jugada* (see Glossary), the excuse from manual labour in the *anúduva*, and the right to exercise as a public officer. The villain cavalry always fought in the vanguard of the host, which was very risky but highly prestigious. In the municipal charters, the widows and the children of the knights killed in combat maintained all the privileges of their social status, as long as they lived in the lands of the county.

The village cavalry was the elite of the municipal forces. They played a prominent role in municipal life, dominating the oligarchy that governed the community, developing group solidarity to protect their social and economic prerogatives vis-à-vis other municipal groups and even against the nobility and the seigneurial structures. The municipal cavalry constituted a real barrier to seigneurial expansion in the central regions of Portugal.

The foot soldiers came immediately below those horsemen in the social and military hierarchy. These were an amalgam of free men, with scarce resources and who, because they had no horse, could only perform military service on foot. They were very rudimentarily armed with a spear, a javelin and not much else. Since they moved on their own feet they were, in Portuguese lands, exempt from going into the *fossado*. But they were obliged to provide service under the *apelido*.

The last quarter of the 11th century gave rise amongst the peonage to a group that would eventually become very important, namely the crossbowmen. This group assumed a status that was equivalent to that of the municipal cavalry. The crossbowmen played a significant role not only in the defence of castles and cities, but also in offensive expeditions and field battles throughout the 12th and 13th centuries.

II The Late Middle Ages 1249–1367

1249–1367 A time of reforms and royal consolidation

Miguel Gomes Martins and João Gouveia Monteiro[1]

Given the new geo-strategic context that emerged after the end of the *Reconquista* ('reconquest'), the Portuguese Crown became fully aware of the inadequacy of the military structure on which that massive political and military enterprise was based. Between 1249 and 1367, this 'society organized for war' had no choice but to rearrange itself. This resulted in profound military reforms, combined with a reinforcement of royal authority. Episodes of war – internal and external – were not entirely absent from this period, eminently peaceful though it was. This state of things permitted the quick enactment of those reforms, while it was possible to measure their effectiveness (Martins 2014; Barroca 2003; J. G. Monteiro 2003).

Afonso III and Dinis: mobilizing the nobility

In the early days of March 1249, Afonso III (1249–1279) laid siege to Faro. This operation was vital for the king, for reasons both military – Faro being the last town yet to be taken from the Muslims in the Algarve – and political – since defeat might threaten his authority, which was still somewhat unsteady, as he had ascended to the throne as a result of civil war. To ensure success, Afonso III gathered a large army and secured massive logistics, resorting to siege engines and significant naval support. Despite all these precautions, the siege would be lifted in less than a month, when the besieged accepted the generous surrender conditions offered by the king. Complete dominion over the Algarve brought the Portuguese *Reconquista* to an end. It also established the current

borders of mainland Portugal, barring minor, subsequent adjustments (Martins 2011: 169–193).

Still, borders were far from being safe, especially to the north and east, where Portuguese territory was contiguous to Castile and Leon. These kingdoms maintained strong expansionist agendas which included the Algarve, leading to an armed conflict between 1250 and 1253. The contention was initially resolved by the marriage of Afonso III to a daughter of Alfonso X, in 1253, and later, by the 1267 treaty, by which Portugal regained full sovereignty over those southern territories.

Though successful in their outcome, all of Afonso III's early campaigns were hindered by difficulties in mobilizing the royal army, mostly resulting from the failure of the model traditionally applied to the recruitment of noblemen, still largely based on the feudal relationship between lords and vassals. The monarch attempted to solve this problem with two novel approaches, namely the payment of *soldadas* (wages) to a larger number of noblemen and the conversion of his private guard into an actual small army, called the king's *mesnada* (retinue), which could be assembled swiftly, much like a rapid reaction force. It soon became the backbone of the royal army. These were important resolutions, but their temporary nature rendered them quite insufficient for the needs of Afonso III's heir, Dinis (1279–1325), regarding the episodes of strife with his brother, *Infante* D. Afonso.

Afonso owned a vast estate, located next to the border with Castile, which included the strongholds of Portalegre, Marvão, Arronches and Castelo de Vide. In 1281, he engaged in direct confrontation with the king by promoting an extensive renovation project in the Castelo de Vide castle without permission. In response, Dinis laid siege to the fortress, leading a force essentially composed of urban militias, because of an almost complete absence of noble *mesnadas*. The besieged fortress surrendered after just one month. A new conflict between the two brothers would arise in 1287, when Afonso lent his support to a Castilian rebel, Álvaro Nuñez de Lara. Since this originated a predicament not only for Dinis, but also for Fernando IV of Castile, both kings gathered their armies and attacked the castle of Arronches, besieging it during the months of November and December, until the defenders eventually surrendered. As a consequence of the 1281 Castelo de Vide episode, Dinis punished his brother by making him his vassal and forcing him to undo all the unauthorized renovations to the fortress. This time around, however, the punishment was a lot harsher, and Afonso was deprived of the village and castle of Marvão. In 1299, a new spell of rivalry between the two brothers broke out, once again because of the *Infante*'s meddling in Castilian affairs. The king laid siege to Portalegre, relying on a force of approximately 5,000 warriors, including noble *mesnadas*, local militias and military orders. The

siege was raised only six months later, upon Afonso's surrender. Consequently, he lost the castles of Portalegre and Arronches and was sent into exile (Barroca 2003: 63).

Judging by the size of the army gathered under the king in 1299, it would appear that mobilizing the nobility was no longer a problem. As a matter of fact, soon after the 1287 campaign – for which the value of the *soldadas* had been raised, in order to ensure that some of the seigneurial retinues would join him – the king enacted a number of policies which successfully persuaded noblemen to fulfil their military duties. He required virtually all sections of the nobility to render vassalage, offering payment in return (either in specie or as rents and lands). The agreement determined that vassals responded when summoned by mustering a *mesnada* that should incorporate a number of knights proportional to the amount of the payment (now called *quantia* or *contia*) they had received. Later, during the 1330s, Afonso IV (1325–1357) would improve upon this formula, establishing a minimum value for his vassals' horses and stipulating the defensive and offensive weapons for each vassal and knight in his retinue.

Weapons, local militias and the fleet

At this time, there was significant improvement in weaponry all across Europe. Portugal was no exception, actually following that progress very closely. Advancements were especially remarkable in defensive weapons, such as with the widespread use of padded armour, including the pourpoint, the gambeson and the brigandine. Another innovation consisted of the use of iron plate for the limbs and upper body. All these enhancements were intended as a reinforcement of the protection already afforded by mail armour hauberk. Improvements to head protection items were also adopted swiftly. Both the barbute and the bascinet were in use in Portugal as early as the 1340s, gradually replacing the less refined conic or closed helmets, commonplace in Portuguese warfare during the 13th century.

As far as offensive weapons were concerned, improvements were rare and not as relevant. The introduction of the thrusting sword in the mid-14th century appears to have been the greatest innovation. This weapon, though similar in structure to earlier swords, was intended for piercing instead of cutting. The blade was thinner and pointier for that reason. Records also describe the use of enhanced maces, now capable of rending metal because of thick, robust blades mounted radially at the head. These upgraded maces emerged as a response to improvements in defensive weapons. The main

innovations in neuroballistic weaponry consisted of the addition of the stirrup to the crossbow and the hook carried around hanging from the crossbowman's belt. From the early 14th century onwards, these two pieces of technology rendered the weapon more powerful and faster to arm.

Even if Dinis chose not to impose regulations on the weapons employed by his vassals' retinues, he did control those of the local militias. These forces had proved crucial for both territorial expansion and defence operations in the context of the Portuguese *Reconquista*.

However, as Portugal's southern border kept advancing, and particularly after the conquest of Algarve, these militias lost much of their previous military capability. In a royal attempt to counter this, a complete reformation of the militias' conditions of service was carried out between 1315 and 1317, in the form of a revision of the criteria of wealth that determined whether an individual should join as a knight or foot soldier. However, the most significant novelty was the introduction of subdivisions within those two categories, namely light and heavy cavalry, lancers and crossbowmen. Personal wealth dictated which segment a fighter belonged to. The new legislation was also very specific in determining the type of armament to be worn in each of these categories. In order to verify that the regulations were applied, Dinis restored the somewhat disused local inspections on the quality and good condition of weapons and horses. They were carried out at regular intervals.

Dinis created yet another type of local militia, the *besteiros do conto* (literally, a number of crossbowmen), so as to improve the military sufficiency of municipalities. This was an independently regulated group of warriors with its own chain of command. Kept in a high state of readiness, it consisted of a fixed number of men submitting to regular training and equipped with potent weaponry. These forces were mustered in recruitment units spread around the kingdom, which were required to provide a predefined number (*conto*) of crossbowmen. This reached 300 soldiers, in Lisbon alone.

Dinis was also responsible for other advances in the kingdom's military structure, particularly the navy. In 1317, he hired the Genoese admiral Emanuele Pezagno, who brought about 20 experts in naval matters with him to Portugal to command the royal ships and train new captains and crews. The establishment of shipyards in Lisbon, with room for 13 galleys, also bears testament to a developing war navy. This increased naval capacity did not mean, however, that merchant and transport ships ceased to be utilized. In fact, these made up more than half of the vessels used for sea operations and could be especially fitted with rams, castles on the aft and fore and shielded rails. Nevertheless, even before the arrival of the Genoese experts, the Portuguese navy was already a force to be reckoned with, proving very capable for land-based and maritime operations. Examples include, respectively, the naval

support to the siege against Faro in 1249, and the naval battle of 1296, part of the Portuguese intervention in Castile (Duarte 2003: 298–303).

From the 1296 intervention in Castile to the 1319–1324 civil war

Supporting Alfonso de la Cerda's claims to the Castilian throne, Dinis and his brother-in-law, Jaime II of Aragon, contrived an ambitious plan to divide Castile into two autonomous polities. According to the plan, de la Cerda and his uncle Juan would become kings of Castile and Leon, respectively. Once the Aragonese armies had entered Castilian territory, one from the north and the other through Murcia, the Portuguese army advanced into Valladolid in September 1296. The city, defended by Fernando IV, was then besieged with the aid of a Castilian rebel contingent. The reaction to the attack was timid, consisting mainly of small-scale raids into Portuguese territory. These were carried out by land, in the province of the Alentejo, and by sea, through a fleet which reached Lisbon but was eventually defeated off the coast of Sines as it returned home. Jaime II of Aragon was mostly committed to overpowering Murcia, and his lack of interest in Valladolid prompted

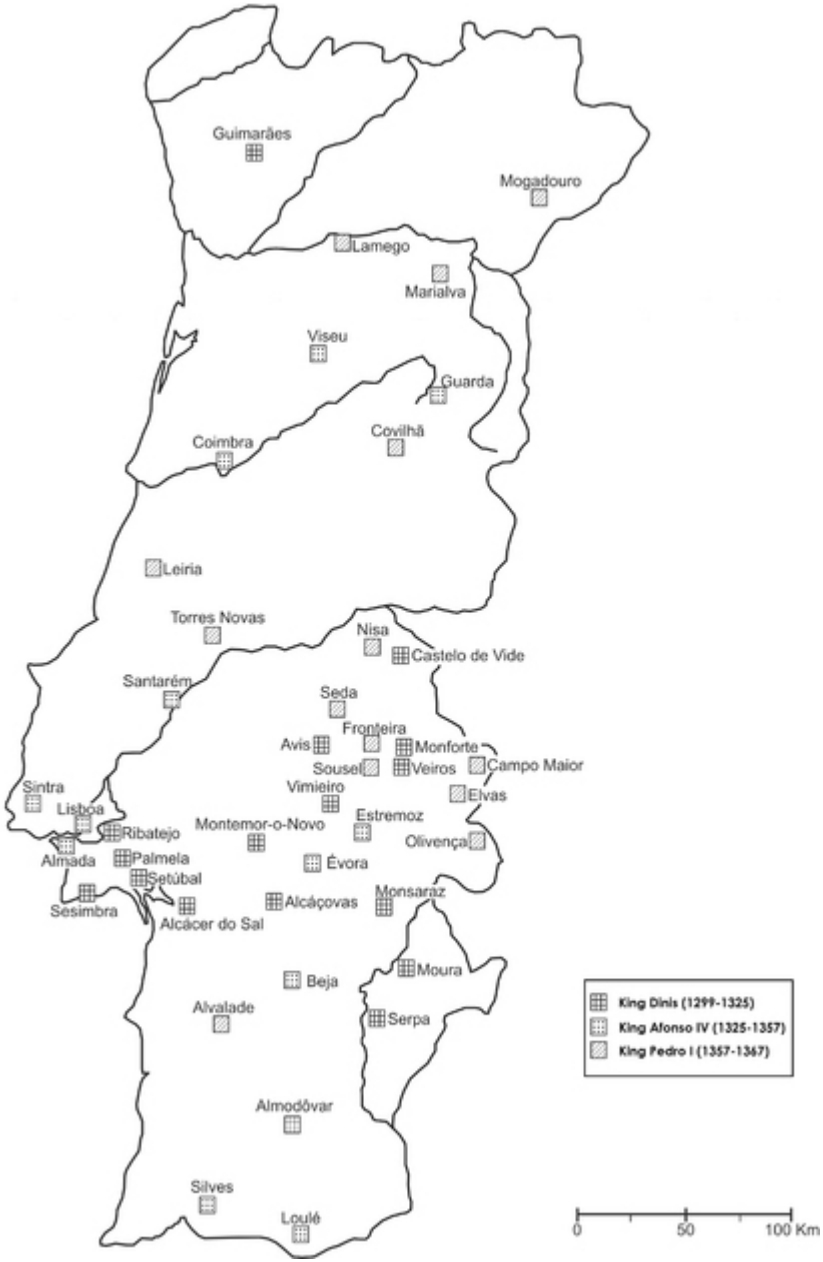

FIGURE 6.2 *Besteiros do conto* (crossbowmen) in Portugal (1299–1367). (Authors' map)

the Portuguese army to retreat. While crossing the border on their way back, Dinis' army occupied the castles and villages on the right bank of the River Côa. The territory would be formally included in Portugal in the 1297 Treaty of Alcañices (Barroca 2003: 64–65). The Castle of Sabugal was one such fortress, later equipped with active defences. These had begun to appear in France earlier in the century, and were then applied gradually to Portuguese

fortifications.

Afonso III had already introduced a number of changes to the structure of castles, and he had had first-hand contact with such innovations during a period living in France. These innovations, however, became more prominent during Dinis' reign. Walls were erected taller and thicker, with *torres de menagem* (keeps) also becoming higher, such as that in the Beja castle with a height of nearly 40 metres. The base of these towers began to veer towards a pentagonal (in Sabugal) or hexagonal (Freixo de Espada à Cinta) shape, replacing the traditional square form. Such towers were more resistant and provided warriors with wider shooting angles. They were also moved from the centre closer to the gates, adjacent to the walls (sometimes even outside them) and usually placed at the corners. Fortified towers built along the walls, at intervals of 8 to 15 metres, became increasingly common. This not only provided reinforcement to the walls, it also enabled more efficient flanking. The introduction of balconies with *mata-cães* (machicolations) ensured the defence of vulnerable, strategic spots, such as the gates. These, in turn, were also reinforced with fortified towers at each side, transformed into curved entrances, or supplemented with drawbridges, which involved the excavation of either dry or water-filled moats. These contraptions were designed to hinder the approach of enemies with their heavy weaponry. Documents dating from the 13th century further mention the use of barbicans as a defensive device.

FIGURE 6.3 Sabugal castle. (Photo by Nuno Tavares)

Existing records register an impressive number of 143 building interventions during the period between 1249 and 1367 alone. These included constructions, reconstructions, upgrades and reparations. Of these, 32 were executed during Afonso III's reign and 76 during the rule of Dinis (Barroca 2000). Both monarchs thus prioritized improvement – qualitative as well as quantitative – of the kingdom's fortification network. They also acknowledged the role of these castles in safeguarding the kingdom's territory, particularly the (presumably more vulnerable) land borders. The walled villages and castles dotting these borders would develop according to a structure of two, sometimes three, parallel lines of defence, which became increasingly noticeable (J. G. Monteiro 1999: 51–95).

However, the neighbouring kingdom of Castile was not the only menace that the Portuguese Crown had to deal with. The civil war between Dinis and his son, prince Afonso, was clear proof of that. Dinis' close relationship with his illegitimate son, Afonso Sanches, fuelled Afonso's jealousy to a point where he feared being left behind in the succession to the throne. Soon, this family quarrel grew out of proportion, as the prince gathered enormous support from the nobility, since a large part were disgruntled at the royal policy of seigneurial control. The escalation of violence was triggered by the prince's army, which had incorporated many outlaws and *homiziados* (see Glossary), which was common for private armies of the time. Between 1319 and 1321, Afonso carried out armed actions throughout the kingdom and, on two occasions, a direct confrontation with the royal army was impending. The conflict reached new heights when the rebels occupied Leiria. They then conquered Coimbra and, in 1322, Montemor-o-Velho, Feira, Gaia and Oporto, giving Afonso control over the greater part of the central and northern regions of the country. The king reacted by retaking Leiria and attacking Coimbra, which forced Afonso to lift his siege on Guimarães, as the town failed to surrender. The two armies met at the gates of Coimbra, and the resulting skirmishes eventually gave way to the signing of a peace treaty. As early as the following October, Afonso broke the terms of the treaty, arguing that his demands to shun his half-brother had not been met. Thus, by the end of the year, both armies marched to Lisbon, ready for a pitched battle. With the tactical units already positioned on the battlefield, the confrontation was averted *in extremis* by the Holy Queen Isabel of Aragon, who also supported the signing of a new peace treaty, which remained in force for the rest of 1323. Still, the matter took an unexpected turn in February 1324, when Afonso's army prevented the king from entering Santarém. The ensuing confrontation culminated with father and son becoming reconciled within a matter of days as Dinis finally agreed to dismiss Afonso Sanches. The king would live only for one more year, putting an end to a 46-year reign.

Unsurprisingly, as soon as he was crowned in 1325, Afonso IV confiscated all of Afonso Sanches' assets in Portugal. Sanches' reaction came swiftly, with numerous raids on Trás-os-Montes and the upper Alentejo. Hence, in August, King Afonso laid siege to La Codosera, a fortification located within the Castilian domains of Afonso Sanches, who was visiting Alfonso XI's court at the time. The fortress was besieged for two months until it surrendered. Afonso IV had it demolished immediately afterwards (Barroca 2003: 66–68; J. G. Monteiro 2003: 245).

Portugal and Castile between the 1336–1338 war and the 1340 alliance

It has become clear that, like the earlier period, much of the military activity carried out between the mid-13th and mid-14th centuries was focused on the taking of strongholds. Thus, sieges were an essential component of warfare in Portugal. Sieges were also frequent because the besieged were aware of their advantages over the besiegers. This encouraged military commanders to take shelter in castles. These were not the only reasons for recurring siege warfare. Portuguese warfare still relied on a taxation system that largely neglected the funding of armies and military campaigns. Besides, armies were heterogeneous and assembled only for short periods of time, while artillery did not develop enough to outdo permanent defensive structures. Moreover, commanders were generally risk-averse, preferring to take refuge behind battlements and to launch *chevauchées* and other offensive operations geared towards the destruction of the enemy's resources, thus avoiding open battle. Such was the typical Portuguese strategy between the mid-13th and mid-14th centuries. Historian João Gouveia Monteiro (1998: 245) described them as: 'a "tear and wear" approach, with operations mostly being limited to specific places at given intervals. The assailed party would defend itself tenaciously, considerably slowing the assailant's progress.' The goal was to defeat the enemy through attrition, hunger, disease, guerrilla action and exhaustion. In other words, this was 'evasive warfare', as Afonso IV himself suggested in 1336 – according to the *Crónica de Portugal de 1419* (ch. 153, p. 250) – as he prepared for a military intervention in Castile.

The signing of the Escalona Treaty and the marriage of Afonso IV's daughter to Alfonso XI of Castile, at the beginning of the 1330s, created the promise of peace. However, everything changed during the spring of 1336. In the midst of a nobility uprising against Alfonso XI, the heir to the Portuguese throne, prince Pedro, was married by proxy to Constança, the daughter of Juan

Manuel, one of the leaders of the rebellion. The Castilian monarch was very displeased at the union, and immediately forbade Constança from leaving the kingdom. This provided Afonso IV with a perfect motive to cross the border at the head of an army to force Alfonso XI to abandon the siege of Lerma, a city defended by Juan Nuñez de Lara, another of the rebellion's ringleaders.

Thanks to the reforms by Dinis, the Portuguese Crown now counted on a force that was ready to be mustered in the form of the king's guard, the noble *mesnadas*, the local militias and the military orders. This army must have comprised around 1,000 to 1,500 knights and 2,000 to 4,500 foot soldiers. Such were the forces mobilized for the military conflicts of 1296 and 1299, and again in 1336. Even though the army was not particularly numerous, it was still crucial to organize these men under an efficient chain of command. Naturally, leadership belonged with the king or a replacement appointed for a given campaign. The king or his substitute would lead the rearguard in march and on the battlefield. The *alferes* acted as his lieutenant. It was he who carried the royal banner and who led the vanguard. If necessary, the *alferes* could be replaced by a *sub-alferes*. As captains of tactical units – like those heading the wings and the main host – they had under their control officers responsible for the various contingents within each unit, often headed by an *alferes*. The chain of command also included the *adaís*, in charge of exploratory missions, and the *almocadéns*, responsible for leading small infantry detachments (Martins 2014: 366–376).

The 1336 campaign began in the spring as usual, with the siege of Badajoz and several attacks on that region. Meanwhile, a fleet commanded by Gonçalo Nunes Camelo ransacked several villages along the coast of Andalusia. At the same time, the king's half-brother, Count Pedro, raided Galicia, the coast of which was also attacked by a different fleet led by Admiral Pessanha. Since none of these actions succeeded in forcing Alfonso XI to lift his siege on Lerma, Afonso IV's army retreated to Portuguese territory. In the meantime, Alfonso XI managed to defeat his domestic opposition, with Juan Nuñez surrendering in December and an agreement was signed with Juan Manuel. Hence, in June 1337, Alfonso XI launched an attack on Elvas and the surrounding area. A few weeks later, he returned to Portuguese territory, this time targeting the eastern Algarve. In the same year, the Portuguese fleet was defeated off the coast of Faro in one of the very few sea battles fought between the mid-13th and the mid-14th centuries. In November, Afonso IV retaliated by attacking Galicia, at a time when contacts aimed at a peace treaty were already underway. Thanks to these contacts, a one-year truce was signed in December, only to be interrupted in the summer of 1338, when the Portuguese northern border was breached. However, the negotiation rounds starting in September (promoted by the Holy See) and the danger posed by the Marinids to both

kingdoms eventually led to a definitive agreement, signed in July 1339.

The Marinids were already in control of Gibraltar and Algeciras, and were next expected to conquer Tarifa, for control over both banks of the Strait of Gibraltar. This was essential to stage a new Muslim invasion of the Iberian Peninsula. A pressured Alfonso XI then initiated negotiations with Portugal, upon which Afonso IV decided to mobilize some ships to the Strait, in April 1340. This was intended as a military alliance to halt the progress of a common enemy, who meanwhile had enlisted the support of Yusuf I of Granada. The alliance attempted to prevent the Marinid conquest of Tarifa, under siege since the end of September. Circumstances were ideal for rekindling the Crusade ideals and to fuel the (in the end, unfulfilled) plans by Afonso IV to organize a crusade on northern Africa. Thus, the famous Battle of Salado was fought on 30 October. Alfonso XI defeated the Marinids, while Afonso IV's army – reinforced with Castilian contingents – vanquished the Granadine forces. This completely shattered any Muslim hopes of retaking the Iberian Peninsula (J.G. Monteiro 2003: 245–249; Martins 2011: 217–268).

The Crown and the military orders

One of the most interesting accounts of the Battle of Salado is found in the *Livro de Linhagens do Conde D. Pedro* (Vol. 1, pp. 242–257), based on the testimony of the master of the Portuguese Hospitallers, Álvaro Gonçalves Pereira. Like the masters of the orders of Christ, Avis and Santiago, Pereira led the forces of his own order in response to Afonso IV's appeal. To fight the Muslims meant returning to the mission for which the military orders had originally been created.

These orders were made up of a relatively small number of friar-knights. To the 69–71 friar knights of the Order of Christ (created in 1319 by King Dinis, from the ashes of the then extinct Order of the Temple) were added 6 sergeants and 58 aides during the 1320s. As for the Order of Santiago, it comprised 61 friar-knights, 4 to 6 sergeants and approximately 30 aides. The Order of Avis also added 4 sergeants and 11 aides to its 51 friar-knights. The Hospitallers (with very few Portuguese sources) probably included about 50 friar-knights and about 25 sergeants and aides. Given this, the military orders had no choice but to use additional recruitment sources by associating with noble retinues, mobilizing the vassals of their most powerful members, utilizing *homiziados*, *almogávar* (see Glossary) bands, and especially the local militias from the domains of the orders. In all, each military order might have mustered from two to three hundred horsemen, which would explain both their celebrated

role in the *Reconquista* and their subsequent permanence in the armies mobilized by the Crown. It should, however, be noted that their main mission was chiefly concerned with defending the territory. They held custody over nearly 50 fortresses and wide estates located in the centre and southern regions of Portugal, most of them close to the eastern border.

FIGURE 6.4 Almour ol castle, built by the Templars in the middle of River Tagus. (Photo by Orilaf Fotografia)

The Crown was aware of their military importance as well as of the political and economic power in their hands. From Dinis' reign onwards, kings tightened the leash on those institutions. Not only was the Order of Christ created, but the Portuguese branch of the Order of Santiago also became autonomous from Castile. Members were also made to render vassalage to the king. Above all, kings influenced the choice of masters. For instance, Pedro I's son, João (the future king João I), was appointed master of Avis at the tender age of seven (if not a little bit younger). All these examples show the profound changes taking place within the sphere of the military orders during this period. As a consequence of such changes in the orders' relationship with the Crown it should come as no surprise that many of these individuals were assigned with very critical missions. The master of Avis led the 600 lances (corresponding to 600 knights) sent by Pedro I to help the Castilian king in 1361, and the master of the Hospitallers, Álvaro Gonçalves Pereira, was charged by Afonso IV with coordinating the defence of Oporto during the 1355–1356 confrontation between the king and the *Infante* D. Pedro.

The romantic relationship between prince Pedro, a widower since 1345, and the Castilian lady, Inês de Castro – who had already borne three of his children – had already started to drag the prince into the internal conflicts of

Castile, in which the powerful Castro dynasty played an important role. The execution of Inês in 1355 – probably ordered by Afonso IV himself – was intended to avert more serious damage, namely a possible marriage and the legitimation of her children with Pedro. This episode prompted the *Infante* to attack northern Portugal, including an unsuccessful attempt to take the city of Oporto, with an army which included numerous outlaws. This failure resulted in a settlement (signed in August and ratified the following January) to reflect mutual compromises. This paved the way for a period of peace that lasted throughout the whole of Pedro I's reign (1357–1367), bringing a cycle of profound changes in the military organization of Portugal to an end (J. G. Monteiro 2003: 250).

1367–1495: A time of transition

João Gouveia Monteiro

Political outline[2]

The 16 years of the reign of King Fernando I (1367–1383) were marked by wars against Castile. This was also due to the influence of certain Castilian and Galician families who had sought exile in Portugal and to whom Fernando gave lands and titles. When Pedro I of Castile was assassinated (1369), Fernando, who was the great-grandson of Sancho IV, tried to expand his territory to the east. He entered into alliances with Aragon and with Granada and invaded Galicia, while a Portuguese fleet blockaded Seville. Enrique II of Castile responded, with French help from Du Guesclin. He besieged Braga and Guimarães and removed the blockade at Guadalquivir. In March 1371, a peace treaty was signed at Alcoutim: the Portuguese king was forced to leave the places occupied and promised to marry the *Infanta* Leonor of Castile. However, Fernando quickly disowned this fiancée to marry Leonor Teles de Meneses and entered into an alliance with the Duke of Lancaster, John of Gaunt (1372). Enrique II did not like this and besieged Lisbon in February 1373. Fernando surrendered and had to sign a humiliating agreement, the Treaty of Santarém (March 1373).

Nevertheless, Fernando pressed for the renewal of the alliance, resorting to João Fernandes Andeiro, a Galician exiled in England. An army led by the Earl of Cambridge came to Portugal in July 1381, at a time when King Juan I was

on the throne in Castile. When battle seemed inevitable, Portuguese-Spanish negotiations led to an agreement that ended the war (August 1382). Shortly afterwards, Fernando fell ill and João Andeiro, having been made the Count of Ourém, assumed control of Portuguese politics. He gradually distanced himself from the English alliance. Furthermore, when the Castilian Queen passed away in 1382, an arrangement was made with Juan I for him to marry Beatriz, the only daughter of Fernando and Leonor! In April 1383, an agreement was signed where, if Fernando passed away without a male heir, Leonor Teles would take on the Regency until a son of Juan and Beatriz reached the age of 14 and was able to govern Portugal. The House of Trastâmaras wanted to establish its presence in all the Iberian royal houses.

Fernando passed away in October 1383 and Leonor Teles took on the Regency, but a part of the nobility, made up of second sons and bastards led by the Master of Avis (João, bastard son of Pedro I of Portugal), who were tired of the Castilian influence in Lisbon, revolted. On 6 December, João Andeiro was assassinated and the revolution spread. Leonor Teles asked for the help of her son-in-law, who invaded Portugal and forced his mother-in-law to give up the regency. Following this, he laid siege to Lisbon (May 1384).

In the meantime, the Battle of Atoleiros had taken place on 6 April 1384. Here, the young Nuno Álvares Pereira, whom the Master of Avis had appointed *fronteiro* (military governor) of the Alentejo, defeated a Castilian troop advancing on Lisbon. Excited, the Master of Avis subdued several fortresses still on the side of Beatriz and Juan I. He then convened a meeting of the *Cortes* in Coimbra which, on 6 April 1385, proclaimed him as King João I of Portugal. The king of Castile reacted and organized a tripartite attack: his fleet blocked Lisbon, the king besieged the border fortress of Elvas and a *hoste* (group of armed men) headed by Rodríguez de Castañeda invaded Beira. Only the first operation went well because Elvas resisted and the incursion through Beira was fought near Trancoso, where an army of Portuguese noblemen slaughtered the Castilian troops (29 May).

Juan I had to change his plans and in July, amassed his forces in Ciudad Rodrigo and entered Portugal, claiming his rights to the crown on behalf of Beatriz. The goal was to lay siege to Lisbon again. However, on 14 August 1385, João I and Nuno Álvares (now *condestável*) crushed the Castilian column at Aljubarrota, with English support. In October, Nun'Álvares defeated the Castilians at Valverde (Mérida). The Portuguese king neutralized the last vestiges of resistance and on 9 May 1386, signed the Luso-British alliance at Windsor. Portugal wanted to keep

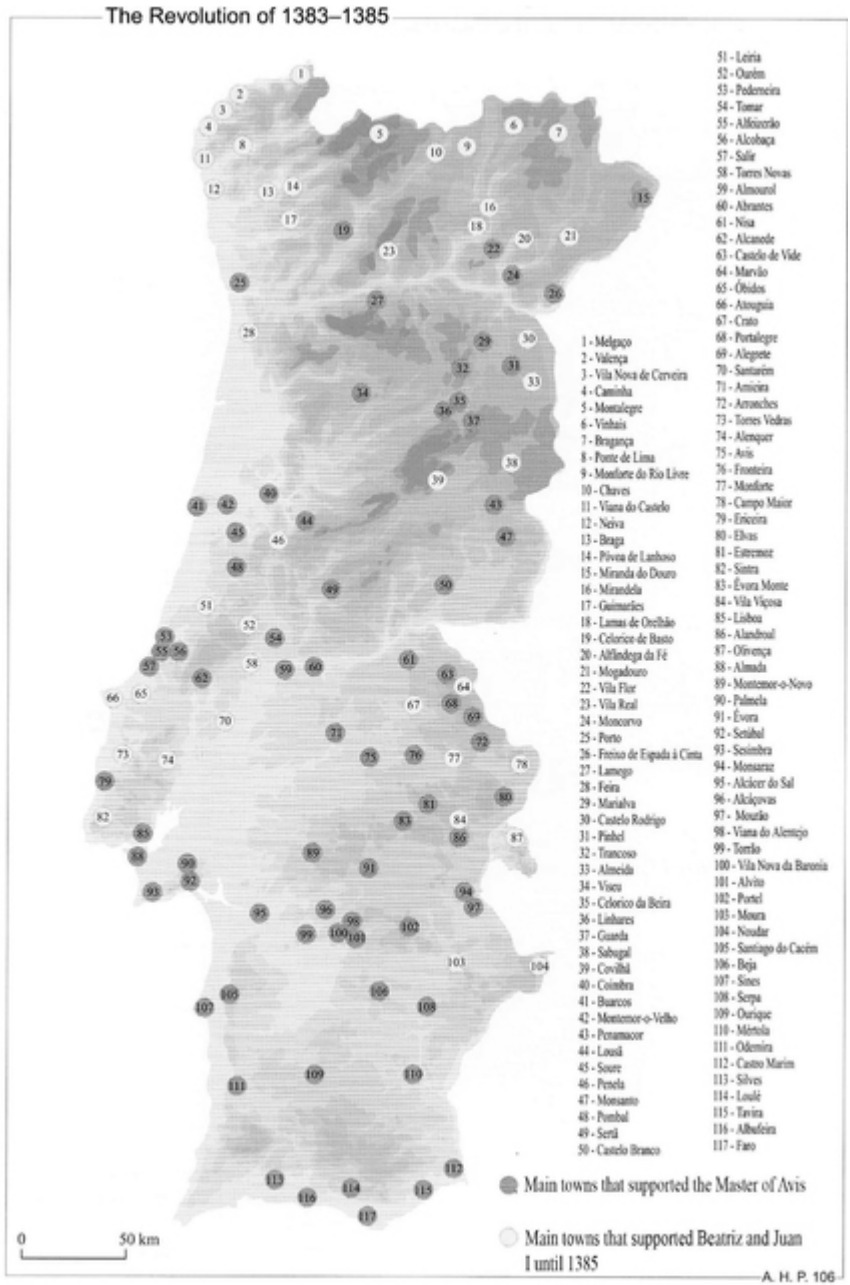

FIGURE 6.5 The Revolution of 1383–1385 (A. H. de Oliveira Marques and João José Alves Dias, *Atlas Histórico de Portugal e do Ultramar Português*. Lisbon, Centro de Estudos Históricos, 2003, p. 127)

their adversary under pressure to avoid a new invasion. For England, it was an opportunity for the Duke of Lancaster, with Portuguese help (a daughter of the Duke, Philippa, married João I) to claim the throne of Castile, since he was

married to a daughter of Pedro I (Russel 1955). In July 1386, John of Gaunt landed in Corunna with a fleet of over 100 ships; in March 1387, an Anglo-Portuguese army invaded the lands of Castile and Leon, in a fruitless campaign that lasted until 4 June. John of Gaunt failed in his attempts and ended up signing the treaty of Trancoso-Bayonne with Juan I. However, João I had obtained what he wanted most: to preserve Portuguese independence. Juan I was no longer able to attack Portugal. He died in October 1390, leaving the throne to a child who was a minor, Enrique III. He married Catherine of Lancaster (the Duke's daughter) and this favoured diplomacy with Lisbon. Enrique III died in 1406 and Catherine took over the coregency. On 31 October 1411, a peace agreement between Portugal and Castile was finally signed in Ayllón (Segovia), which ended decades of disputes and allowed João I to consider new projects.

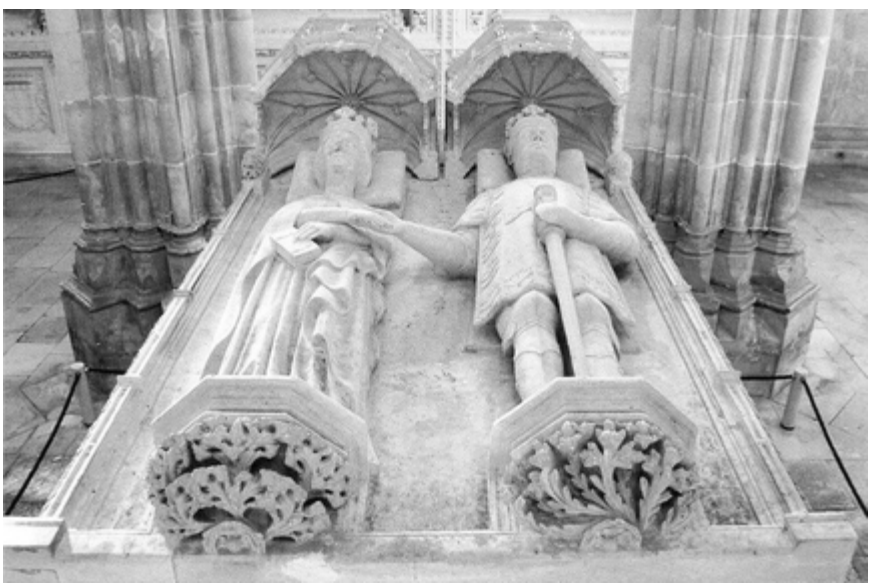

FIGURE 6.6 Double tomb of King João I and Queen Philippa of Lancaster at Batalha Monastery. (João Gouveia Monteiro and António Martins Costa, *1415. A conquista de Ceuta*. Lisbon: Manuscrito, 2015. Photography by Telmo Mendes Leal.)

In 1415, the king commanded the first Portuguese overseas expedition, conquering Ceuta on 21 August. Through this, João I eased his finances (Ceuta was a rich city), strengthened his international position and began to intervene in the military and commercial control of the Strait of Gibraltar. In addition, he hindered Muslim piracy along the Algarve and, without antagonizing Castile, supplied the young nobility with their wishes to shine in war. Following this, João I preferred to rest. He continued to reign until 1433, but his heir Duarte governed from 1418. Duarte was a conscientious king who

introduced several reforms. It was during his reign (1433 to 1438) that Gil Eanes rounded Cape Bojador (1434). However, Duarte's rule was marred by a disaster in Morocco in the summer of 1437. The Portuguese, led by Henrique, attacked Tangiers with badly prepared troops, who did not ensure the link between the camp and the sea. Therefore, when a Muslim relief army reached Tangier, they had to surrender under taxing conditions.

Duarte passed away the following year and left his throne to a child who was a minor (Afonso V). A regency was organized, shared between the widow queen, Leonor of Aragon (sister of the '*Infantes* of Aragão') and the *Infante* Pedro (brother of Duarte and Henrique). The arrangement went badly and the queen had to flee to Castile, where she was poisoned. Pedro was thus able to govern (1439–1448) and during this period boosted navigation. It was during this phase that Henrique was able to achieve better results, with war and piracy proceeding hand in hand with trade. The political strategy followed by Pedro, who was close to the maritime councils did, however, create some opponents. In 1448, Afonso V took away his uncle's regency and Pedro took refuge in the duchy of Coimbra. Advised by Pedro's rivals (especially his half-brother, Afonso, bastard son of João I), the young monarch waged civil war. This ended on 20 May 1449, in Alfarrobeira, near Lisbon. Pedro was killed in battle and Afonso V was then able to rule as he wished. He strengthened royal power and allowed the expansion of the noble houses, particularly that of Viseu (Henrique) and Bragança (the bastard Afonso). The discoveries slowed and Afonso V resumed war in North Africa, relying on the support of the old nobility. In 1458, he took Alcácer Ceguer; in 1463, he attacked Tangiers, but failed; and, in 1471, he conquered Asilah and seized Tangier. Portugal then occupied an area of territory in Africa, supported by four strategically placed fortresses.

During the 1470s, Afonso V took advantage of the war of succession that occurred in Castile upon the death of Enrique IV. As he was the brother of the widowed Castilian Queen (Joana), he decided to intervene. He thus took up the dream of eastward expansion once more. Relying on some Castilian support, Afonso V married his niece Juana (to have a better claim over the royal title) and attacked Zamora and other fortresses. However, he was defeated in the decisive battle, fought in Toro in March 1476. Disillusioned, he handed over governance to his son João, the 'Perfect Prince'. In 1479, a Portuguese-Spanish peace treaty was signed (at Alcáçovas-Toledo), which helped tidy up peninsular political entities and which opened a new period in Iberian history.

Upon the death of his father in August 1481, João II took on *de jure* governance of the country. He contained the great noble houses and reinforced royal power. Expansion was now planned out in detail (exploration of the

African coast, setting up of trading posts and royal monopolies, progress in the art of navigation) and the royal family and the nobility began to take on a more active role. The military aspect of the enterprise was not removed, but the viewpoint became a broader and more commercial one. Shortly afterwards, in 1488, Bartolomeu Dias rounded the Cape of Good Hope and Portugal started to operate on a pluricontinental scale, involving Europe, Africa, Asia and America. In 1493, the voyage of Columbus took place and in June 1494 the Treaty of Tordesillas was signed, which divided the world into two halves. In October 1495, João II died. Soon the remarkable Portuguese 16th century would begin!

The evolution of the army[3]

Between 1367 and 1495, Portuguese military art underwent major changes. As far as recruitment was concerned, Fernando I systematized the *contias* (the fixed annual incomes) of noblemen and many documents refer to the granting of lands or leases as payment of these *contias*. In return, the nobles had to take part in the war: for every 100 pounds, they had to supply the Crown with a 'lancer' (a well-equipped man-at-arms), with the contingents of vassals ranging between 2 and 50 lancers. Besides these *contias*, the King also paid a stipend during the campaigns. With the 1383–1385 revolution, the system broke down: the Master of Avis multiplied the rewards to entice supporters, the number of vassals rose and the stipend increased. Having won the war, João I reserved for the Crown the right to own vassals and stabilized the *contias*' incomes. At the start of the 15th century, the royal council set a number of 3,200 lancers who were always ready to serve the king. Of these, 500 were provided by the major vassals, 2,360 by squires of the lower nobility and 340 by the military orders (Christ, Hospitaller, Avis and Santiago). In this way, progress was made towards the ideal of a standing army. With the campaigns of Africa, the tendency was to establish mercenary forms of contracting to stimulate nobles to serve in Morocco.

Earlier tendencies were confirmed in municipal recruitment. In 1418, a 'Regiment of *Coudéis*' (Cavalry Officers) specified the *aquantiados* system: people with their own home who, depending on the assessment of their fortune by royal officials called *coudéis*, were obliged to possess certain weapons and, for the richest, a horse. In border regions, the values established for having good weapons and a horse were lower than in other regions. Military inspections (*alardos*) were also regulated, and set at a frequency of three per year by João I. With this, the Crown estimated it could count on five

to ten thousand *aquantiados* armed with good weapons and, in some cases, horses. The king also paid a stipend to these men during the campaign.

The *besteiros do conto* (crossbowmen) system was improved, particularly following a regulation in 1421. At that time, there were approximately 5,000 crossbowmen in Portugal, organized in nearly 300 recruitment units – the *anadelarias*, each controlled by a local official (the *anadel*), answering to the *anadel-mor* (commander) of the kingdom. It should be noted, however, that there was a tendency to reduce privileges, which decreased the desire to be a crossbowman and multiplied the requests for exemption. Just like the *coudéis* (calvary officers), the *anadéis* (captains) served for three to five years. In 1392, João I created a new militia: the *besteiros de cavalo* (horse crossbowmen), recruited from among the artisans of the municipalities who were promoted to vassals; this was an elite of 500 archers with a crossbow, with reinforced privileges and the ability to acquire and maintain a horse. This militia was organized into a national network, especially in the centre and the south. They were also paid a stipend during a campaign.

A new feature in the 15th century were the *espingardeiros* (musketeers), who were especially useful in African campaigns and who would become an actual infantry force. João II focused on recruiting these specialists and promoted their presence in various locations. The aim was to establish a fixed number (*conto*) of *espingardeiros*.

As for the Navy, until 1495 there was no permanent fleet, so that it was mobilized for each campaign, through a system of *vintenas* (scores) – groups of 20 neighbours, which served as the basis for the recruitment of the rowers (*galeotes* – galiot sailors). Those responsible (the *vintaneiros*) had *livros de armação* (organized books) where they entered their records. They recruited men from coastal regions who were used to the sea or river tasks. Mobilization was total and for life. The minimum age to serve was 12 years of age and all those who could escape this service did so. Some localities contracted with the king a fixed contribution of sailors and rowers (who were sometimes armed, equipped and supplied for six weeks, with meat, fish, wheat and flour for biscuits), in exchange for certain privileges. In the Portuguese galleys, almost all the rowers were free men who could use weapons until their landing.

The groupings of troops mentioned could ensure the Crown a *hoste* (a group of armed soldiers) of 20,000 men (including the king's guard and the groups of mercenaries). These were, however, ideal figures, because in practice this value was rarely achieved. In Aljubarrota (1385), less than 10,000 men fought alongside João I (part of them English); to Tangier (1437), the *Infante* Henrique could only take approximately 6,000 soldiers; in Alfarrobeira (1449), 16,000 men fought alongside king Afonso V and some 3,500 alongside the former regent Pedro; and, in Toro (1476), Afonso V had no more than 8,500 standing

troops. The establishment of garrisons in African fortresses should also be remembered: the 2,500 men who stayed in Ceuta, in 1415, formed a fixed army embryo; in 1464, there were 3,000 men engaged in war against the infidels, on land and at sea; and, from 1471, with Asilah and Tangier, this number increased to approximately 5,000 soldiers.

As for command positions, the king's guard was strengthened. After Aljubarrota, the monarch ordered that 100 crossbowmen would form part of his company. In 1450, Alfonso V named Gonçalo Rodrigues de Sousa as Captain General of the *ginetes* (light cavalry) of the king, giving him an annual income of 10,000 white *reais*; this was a royal horseback guard, which took part in the battles of Alfarrobeira and Toro. Later, João II spurred the royal guard, promulgating an ordinance and a regiment which foresaw a permanent force of 200 lancers.

The post of *alferes-mor* (royal standard bearer), continued until 1382 when it was replaced by the post of *condestável* and that of marshal, due to English influence. Their duties were related to justice, security and accommodation. The *adaís* (officers who explored the terrain and the enemy) continued to be important, especially in Africa. The same was true for the 'captains', leading the contingents of nobles and municipalities or commanding the Moroccan garrisons. In addition, the castle *alcaides-mores* (fortress commanders) were essential in controlling the fortresses. As for the *fronteiros* (military governors), they were actual governors of border provinces and were very important in the 15th century. They had special powers granted by the monarch in times of crisis which were greater than normal jurisdictions. They were recruited from the high nobility and could be assigned a region or a strategic city, and they had military contingents of 100 to 250 lancers.

The Crown had controlled the military orders since the mid-14th century and in 1364, João (the future João I), when only seven years of age (at most), was appointed Master of Avis, while the order of Santiago was handed over to the *Infante* João (the son of João I) in 1418. The order of Christ was placed in the hands of the *Infante* Henrique in 1420, while in 1434 the order of Avis was given over to the *Infante* Fernando. The military orders continued to be important for the defence of the realm, commanding castles (which stored war arsenals) and ensuring hundreds of military personnel, which were recruited from their lands.

In the navy, of note was the decay of the post of admiral. The post stopped being hereditary from Afonso V onwards, losing its duties and becoming an honorary function. This was partly due to the creation of the post of captain general by Fernando I. The reasons for this are not well known and it seems that the functions varied according to the holders. In principle, the captain general was only in charge during wartime, but there were many conflicts of

jurisdiction because of maritime posts.

Finally, of equal note was the creation of the post of *vedor-mor* (chief inspector) of the artillery, in the regency of the *Infante* Pedro. His function was to identify lost property of the Crown, order resources for land or water transportation, mobilize officers to serve in the artillery, control the delivery of pieces to warehouses, pay the artillerymen, the carpenters, the blacksmiths and stonemasons and ensure supplies to castles and arsenals.

Arms and armour

As for military equipment, this was the period of bascinets and visors, as well as the triumph of highly polished plate metal harnesses covering the trunk and limbs. Tomb sculptures from the 1450–1500 period provide good evidence of the general use of complete harnesses. With Fernando I, the spread of the *jaque* was encouraged, a piece close to cuirasses or brigandines, that is, with metallic elements applied over a stiff leather base. The king ordered the conical *capeline* to give way to the more advanced 'bearded' types (a predecessor of the bascinet) attached to a *camail* – the neck aventail, made of iron mesh and which was attached to the part protecting the head. The Moroccan campaigns enhanced the claim of 'armoured hats', which were an open defence, with wide or curved flaps, good for protection from the sun and rain. They emerged in the Peninsula at the end of the 13th century, but it was the war in Africa and firearms which popularized them.

The main new developments concerned firearms. In Portugal, primitive cannons emerged in the reign of King Fernando, perhaps with the arrival of the fleet of the Earl of Cambridge. The first artillery pieces are well known. They were made of wrought iron and the tubes were thick. Gunpowder was used and the balls were mainly made of stone. During the 15th century, more evolved pieces with lighter tubes and wooden supports appeared, which made them easier to transport and enabled the height of the shot to be regulated. The early Iberian artillery pieces (the *trons* and *bombardas*) could be muzzle or breech loading. One of these pieces can be seen in the Military Museum in Lisbon, which was muzzle loaded. This corresponds to a Portuguese model which was widely used in 15th-century siege operations. It measured 97 x 40 cm and weighed 590 kg with a 14.5 cm calibre size. It shot granite stone balls weighing 3 kg, due to a gunpowder load of about 1 kg. It had an initial velocity of 220 m per second and an atmospheric range between 714 and 1098 metres. This was a piece adapted to siege operations on castles and strategically placed fortresses (Rubim 2000: 234–239). By the end of the 15th century, heavy

gunpowder arms production proved to be insufficient, and so these had to be imported. The *Infante* Pedro bought large quantities of artillery in northern Europe.

FIGURE 6.7 Bombard. (Lisbon Military Museum, Inv: MML, A.1. Published in Mário Jorge Barroca, João Gouveia Monteiro and Isabel Cristina F. Fernandes, *Pera Guerrejar. Armamento medieval no espaço português*. Exhibition catalogue, Palmela Municipality, 2000, p. 418, no. 171)

From João II onwards, new key reforms were made, with a policy focused on expansion towards the Orient, emphasizing nautical aspects and new types of vessels suitable for ocean voyages. Granulated gunpowder started to be used. Workshops for implements of war were established, as well as the start of the manufacture of bronze materials, along with new types of artillery pieces, such as the *falcões* and the *berços*, which were very useful on-board ships. The 'Perfect Prince' made investments to standardize implements of war, and a document from 1489 even mentions the existence of a fixed number of 35 'sea artillerymen', who were paid a stipend (Rubim 2000: 236–242)! As for portable firearms, these were called *colobretas* and began being imported from Flanders near the middle of the 15th century. In the Pastrana Tapestries (Guadalajara), which show the taking of Asilah by Afonso V (1471), it is possible to observe both seven heavy artillery pieces and some perfect illustrations of *colobretas*.

The Crown also sought to stimulate the activity of gunsmiths. The names of many of them are known and we are certain that João II engendered a plan to set up gunsmiths and gun houses, especially in the larger cities of the kingdom, granting them leases and privileges so that they would want to settle there.

Many were of foreign origin – Italian, Castilian, German, French – and others were Jews or Moors. Several were linked to the Royal House or senior figures at court. It was also desired that the craft would remain within the same family and the versatility of gunsmiths was to be encouraged. In the early 15th century, the royal council established the existence of 1,500 harnesses ready for war, 500 of which were provided by King and the others by senior lay and ecclesiastical lords. Around 1450, at the Lisbon arsenal, there was a permanent working group of gunsmiths, which could be reinforced whenever needed.

Fortifications

The firearms forced changes in military architecture: walls become thicker (to support metal balls) and lower (to form a reduced target); priority was given to round towers, which were tougher and had no blind spots; embrasures were opened up; 'casemates' were torn up (gaps within the walls, to fit the new weapons); and the barbicans were strengthened, with angular shapes to vary the angles of fire (e.g. Almeida, Palmela and Elvas). This led to the star fort characteristic of the Modern Age which Portuguese architects would spread throughout the world.

There was also an increase in the construction of urban walls (e.g. Beja, Viana, Braga, Santarém, Coimbra, Lisbon and Viseu) and many fortresses lost their military character and became palaces. Keeps were widened, reaching 100 m2 in their surface area (Bragança and Beja), openings were made for windows and wooden ceilings, fireplaces, kitchens, chapels, false ceilings and arcades open to the outside were introduced (Estremoz, Óbidos and Leiria). King João II concentrated on improving the castles in Africa and building new fortresses (in Essaouira, in Safi and in Mina). This also led to pioneering innovations in terms of coastal defences, such as the plan to defend the River Tagus, with a linked system enabling cross-fire between towers.

The conduct of war

Finally, let us consider the type of warfare that was being practised. Just as in the rest of Europe, there was: i) major investment in siege operations – e.g. the numerous sieges carried out by João I, such as those at Chaves (1386), at Coria (1386), at Alcântara (1400) or at Melgaço (1388); in the latter case, an army of 1,500 lancers and many foot soldiers fought a garrison of 300 men-at-arms and many infantry soldiers for 53 days, winning the day thanks to the use of a

siege tower; ii) predilection of the nobility for riding and raids on enemy territory; iii) moderate availability to fight on the battlefield, provided there were good possibilities of success (e.g. Atoleiros, Trancoso, Aljubarrota, Valverde, Alfarrobeira and Toro). In the case of Nuno Álvares Pereira, the influence of the English tactical model can be seen, which was disseminated throughout the Peninsula after the Battle of Nájera (1367) and spread in Portugal by mercenaries of the Earl of Cambridge and the archers at Aljubarrota.

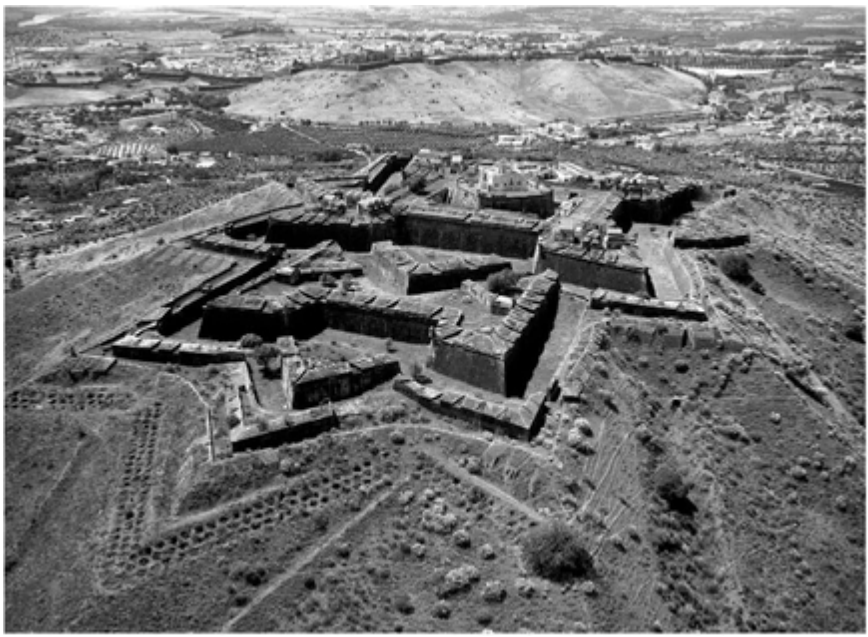

FIGURE 6.8 Fortress of Elvas.

The troops moved into columns with two knights (or three infantry soldiers) in front and several kilometres in depth; speed varied between 4 kilometres (infantry soldiers) and 7 kilometres (knights) per hour. During the summer, mixed columns covered distances of 20 to 35 kilometres each day. The main dangers included crossing rivers, night-time travel and narrow passages, prone to ambushes – hence the importance of reconnoitring of the routes, the use of guides and maps, and maintaining secrecy, silence and rhythmical progress. Supplying marching columns was undertaken in several ways: i) foodstuffs wholesale bought by the Crown and then resold to the combatants through merchants; ii) forced requisition from the people who lived along the march routes; iii) pillaging enemy territories. The financing of operations was achieved through new taxes authorized at meetings of the *Cortes,* but also by contributions from the Church, private individuals and communities of Jews

and Moors. Use was also made of currency devaluations.

There was very little military training (only the tournaments and jousting, for the nobility, and trainings on Sundays, in the castles, for the crossbowmen), with the experience accumulated in previous campaigns being of greatest value. As for theoretical training, only those who were part of royal or manorial courts, or within the circles of military orders, could aspire to study works with propaedeutic content: the adventures of the heroes of Antiquity (such as Alexander or Caesar); the Arthurian legends; the *De Re Militari* by Vegetius (directly or through Gil de Roma or Christine de Pizan); some military law treaties (such as the *Arbre des Batailles* by Honoré Bouvet); and the writings of Castilian authors, such as King Alfonso X or the *Infante* Don Juan Manuel.

Naval warfare

Progress was also made in naval combat, mainly from Fernando I onwards, who continued the reforms introduced since 1317 by Admiral Pessanha (from Genoa) who encouraged the navy to purchase and construct boats, creating the position of captain general and various measures of support for the sailors. The shipyards (*tercenas*) were also improved, and all the settlements that had significant maritime or river activity were equipped with similar facilities – Oporto, for example, had three *tercenas*.

The Portuguese war fleets had significant numbers: 32 galleys and 30 ships in the First Fernandine war; 17 galleys and many other ships in the raising of the Lisbon siege (1384); more than 200 vessels in the conquest of Ceuta, Alcácer Ceguer and, if one believes the chronicler Rui de Pina (CLXIII, 820), 477 boats at Asilah (1471). They used naval boarding, followed by close combat fighting on the ships. When approaching, the vessels used closed shot with short-range projectiles (arrows, short-arrows, incendiary materials) and tried to use its spurs to ram ships, or throw hooks to allow boarding. An attempt was made to blind enemies with lime, destroy them with mechanically projected shot or burn them with Greek fire or with buckets of tar, sulphur, oil and resin released from the deck; the sails of enemy ships could be cut or the rudders sabotaged. With the arrival of naval artillery, there was now another solution, which was initially more used in open combat, with the big guns alongside arms of smaller calibre and range.

In Africa, the Portuguese armies had to get used to another type of war. It was a return to the tactics of the *Reconquista*: a lot of garrison work, surveillance, intelligence, investment in controlling high points and

communication at a distance, creating buffer zones around the conquered fortresses, considerable looting and, of course, lots of prisoner exchanges.

Main campaigns

Siege of Lisbon (1384)

In late May 1384, Lisbon was blocked by land and sea, as Juan I wanted to take the capital, which was the 'military key' to the kingdom. The Master of Avis started preparing the defences of the city early on, which at that time consisted of 35,000 inhabitants. Since February, they had gathered up men and supplies inside the old castle and the wall (5 kilometres long) built by King Fernando. This was reinforced by a barbican wall built in view of the enemy, 300 to 400 m long. Barricades were erected in the riverside area. The city was stocked with bread, meat and fish seized from Castilian galleys. All the crops were destroyed in the surrounding areas. Thanks to loans from the Church and individuals, an army of 1,600 men was put together to save the capital (Martins 2006).

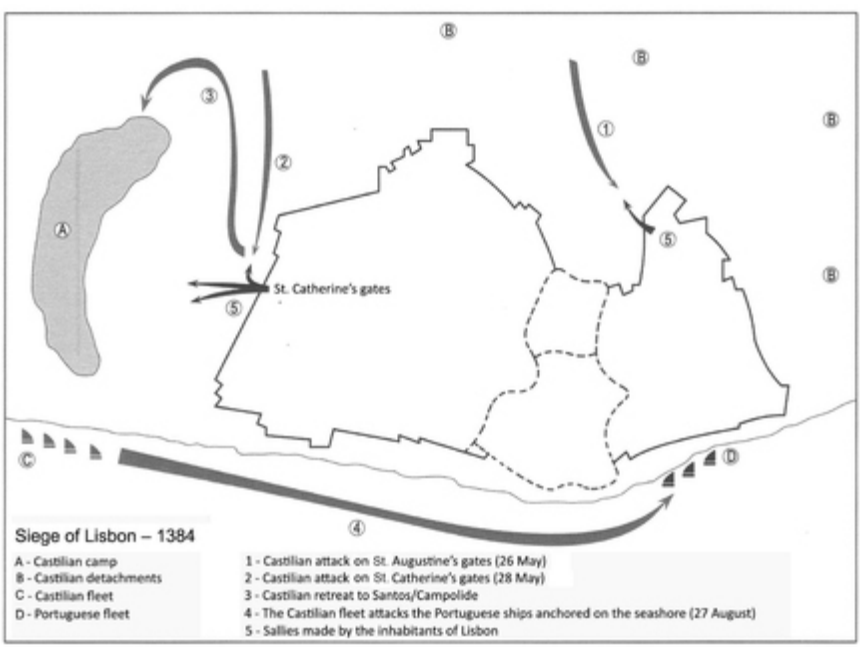
St. Catherine's gates
Siege of Lisbon – 1384
A - Castilian camp
B - Castilian detachments
C - Castilian fleet
D - Portuguese fleet
1 - Castilian attack on St. Augustine's gates (26 May)
2 - Castilian attack on St. Catherine's gates (28 May)
3 - Castilian retreat to Santos/Campolide
4 - The Castilian fleet attacks the Portuguese ships anchored on the seashore (27 August)
5 - Sallies made by the inhabitants of Lisbon

FIGURE 6.9 Siege of Lisbon, 1384. (Miguel Gomes Martins, *De Ourique a Aljubarrota. A guerra na Idade Média.* Lisbon: Esfera dos Livros, 2011, p. 296)

The Castilian camp consisted of between fifteen and twenty thousand men. According to Fernão Lopes (*Crónica de D. João I* CXIV, 193–194), Juan I located himself near the Santos Monastery, while his men were positioned in the areas of Alcântara, Campolide and the surrounding areas. The camp included large well-ordered streets with flags, medical posts and almost all types of trade, from weapons to fabrics and clothing, sold by Christian and Jewish merchants. Well-guarded and fortified, with a palisade on the eastern side, it was stocked with groceries which were brought from Santarém and other places supporting Dona Beatriz. Many boats also arrived from Seville with supplies and weapons.

The Master of Avis reinforced the 76 towers with wooden pergolas. Fernão Lopes (*Crónica de D. João I* CXV, 196) explained that they were provided with shields, lances, darts, crossbows, short-arrows, bacinetes and armour; some had *trons* and stone balls. Noblemen and citizens divided the guarding of the wall and were equipped with alarm bells. At night, they were organized into watches, with the Master of Avis overseeing everything. The 38 city gates were guarded by men-at-arms who slept beside them.

On 18 July, a fleet organized in Oporto managed to break through the naval blockade and restock Lisbon with men and supplies. This gave encouragement to the defenders, but the number of mouths inside the wall also increased (S. Monteiro 1989: I, 37–41). Indeed, the situation remained very delicate. In addition to constant skirmishes, it was necessary to remove all those who, due to their age, sex or physical condition, were not useful for defence. However, the hot and humid summer of 1384 led to the worsening of an outbreak of plague that had begun in the region in late March. Approximately 5,000 Castilians died and the queen might have been affected; the epidemic was not present in the city. Not being able to bear the daily loss of so many soldiers, including 2,000 of his best men-at-arms, Juan I was forced to lift the siege on 4 September and return to Castile. The Castilian fleet would then set sail on 8 October.

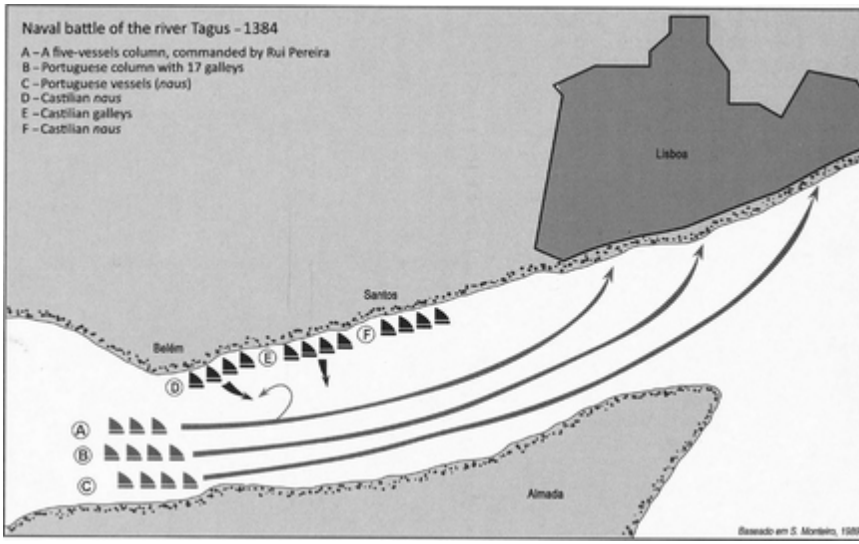
Naval battle of the river Tagus – 1384
A – A five-vessels column, commanded by Rui Pereira
B – Portuguese column with 17 galleys
C – Portuguese vessels (naus)
D – Castilian naus
E – Castilian galleys
F – Castilian naus
Lisboa
Santos
Belém
Almada

FIGURE 6.10 Naval battle on the Tagus, 1384. (Miguel Gomes Martins, *De Ourique a Aljubarrota. A guerra na Idade Média.* Lisbon: Esfera dos Livros, 2011, p. 340. Adapted from Saturnino Monteiro, 1989.)

Ajubarrota (1385)

The Battle of Ajubarrota was fought on 14 August. The troops of João I and Nuno Álvares Pereira, with about 10,000 soldiers (including c.800 Englishmen, mostly archers), intercepted the Castilian army which, under the command of Juan I, was marching from Ciudad Rodrigo towards Lisbon. The battle was fought at São Jorge, to the south of Leiria. On the morning of the 14th, the Anglo-Portuguese troops left Porto de Mós and marched north, having arranged their army at the northern end of a narrow plateau. The position had been chosen the day before by the *condestável* and his English supporters. This was a high, almost impregnable point. When they arrived there late in the morning, coming from Leiria, with the sun to their front, the Castilians avoided the fight and skirted the Portuguese position. In this way, they carried out a cross-country detour, but by the end of the afternoon they had rejoined the road running south, close to Chão da Feira. While the rest of the army was arriving (which would be about 20,000 men, including many Portuguese nobles and 800 to 1,200 French knights), they analysed the situation.

Meanwhile, the Anglo-Portuguese army had turned around, marched 2 kilometres to the south and was now offering battle in a second, also interesting, position – it was where the plateau narrowed with a front which was only 300 m wide. The east and the west contained two creeks coinciding

with depressions in the ground. The troops also carried out fortification works: hundreds of *trous de loup* and a ditch 180 m in length were made; they also stacked branches of trees with their sharp edges facing out (*abatises*), with the goal being to funnel Castilian access to the Portuguese position and hinder the enemy attack. It was an all or nothing situation for João I, a recently crowned king who wanted to avoid a new siege of Lisbon!

The Castilian war council, with the king very sick, accepted the fight. They thought they had a positional and military advantage, and did not want to march south with the enemy at their back. They may also not have recognized the terrain and the obstacles. They therefore precipitated themselves. In the late afternoon, the Franco-Spanish army, still incomplete, attacked (J. G. Monteiro 2009: 75–103).[4] The first assault was by the French knights, who were surprised by the *trous de loup* and the ditches and were captured by the enemy. They had arranged their men in two lines and everyone was dismounted: a vanguard of 600 men-at-arms spread over two or three rows under the command of the *condestável*; and, some 200 or 300 metres behind, João I's rearguard. The wings were placed on the flanks, in a somewhat advanced position, with crossbowmen and English archers.

When the royal Castilian battalion realized the French disaster, it advanced on horseback. However, the narrowness of the battlefield and the obstacles caused confusion. They began to cluster in the centre of the plateau and were only able to move very slowly, which made them a good target. Many dismounted and cut their lances, but this did not help them very much. The wings could not intervene on the flanks in the fighting, because of the gullies and creeks. Only a part of the soldiers managed to reach the men of the *condestável*, being received at the ends of the infantry lancers. A contingent broke through the vanguard, but the wings of Nuno Álvares, with no direct opponents, rotated and fixed the front, while the rear advanced and completed the manoeuvre. The Castilians, without the aid of the French (who were executed on the battlefield), were surrounded and were soon slaughtered. The royal standard fell and this led to panic. Juan I fled to Santarém and from there to Seville.

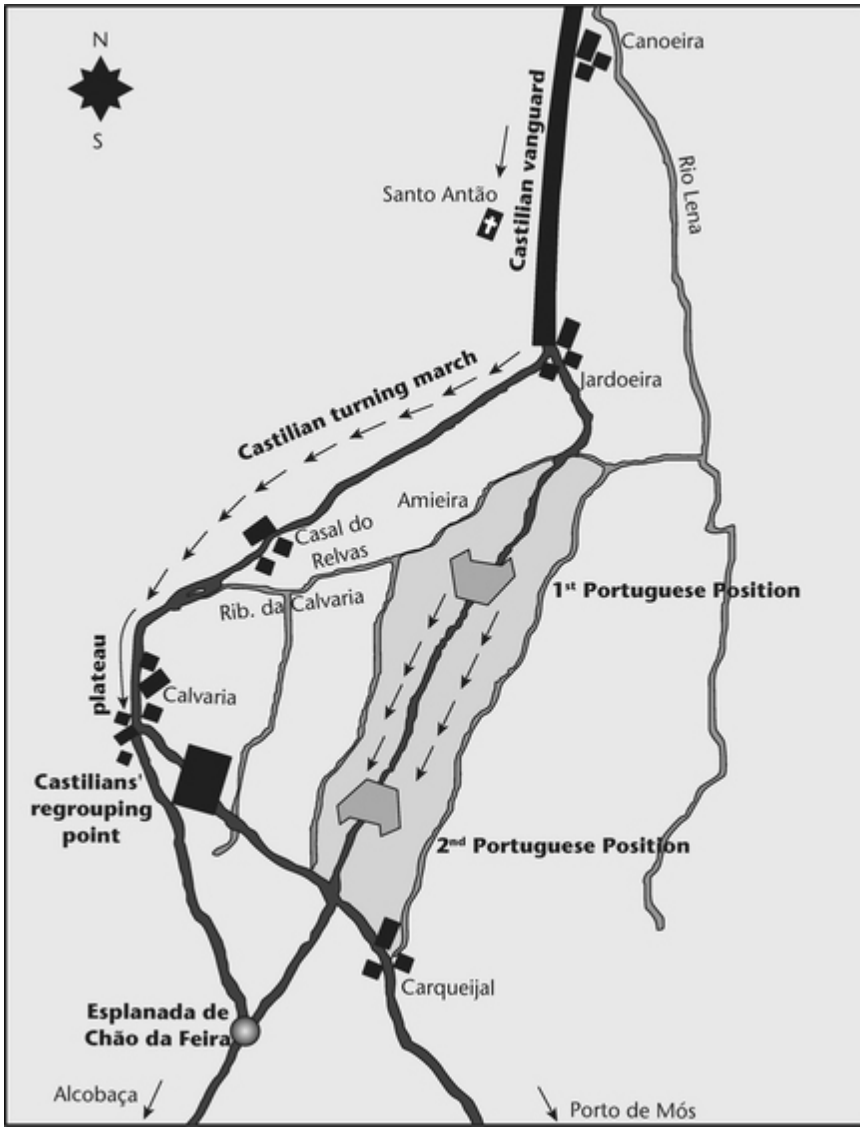

FIGURE 6.11 Preparatory manoeuvres on the Battlefield of Aljubarrota, 1385. (João Gouveia Monteiro, *Aljubarrota, 1385. A Batalha Real*. Lisbon: Tribuna da História, 2003, p. 83. Adapted from Costa Veiga, 1930)

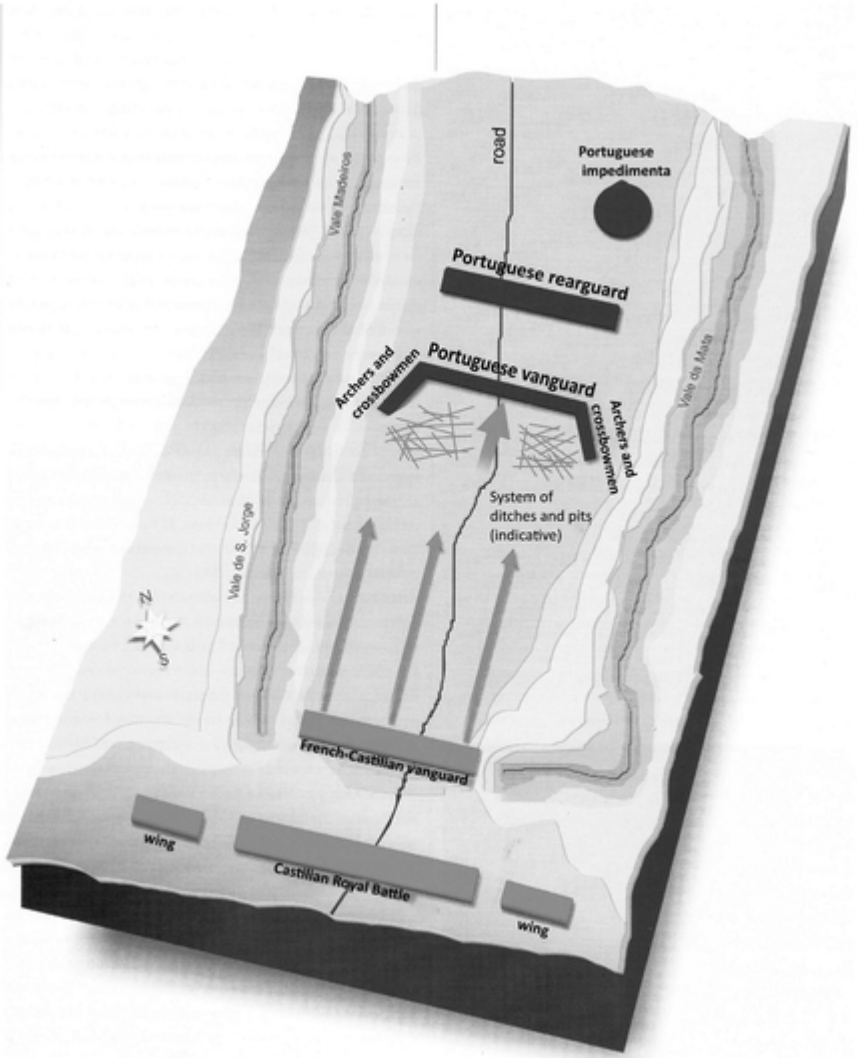

FIGURE 6.12 Battle of Aljubarrota, 1385 (1st phase). (João Gouveia Monteiro, *Aljubarrota, 1385. A Batalha Real.* Lisbon: Tribuna da História, 2003, p.102)

On the battlefield, three to four thousand French and Castilians fell, but a similar number was killed during the escape. On the winning side, around 300 to 500 men perished. A mass grave was found on the battlefield, containing the bones of at least 414 individuals, mostly men between 18 and 65 years of age. An analysis proved the extreme violence of the fight: there were traces of lesions on the bones with strong muscular coverings, suggesting an atmosphere of surprise and confusion, where many would have been wounded from behind or when they were on the ground. There were also about 30 reset fractures, which indicated the presence of war veterans (J.G. Monteiro 2009: 101–102).

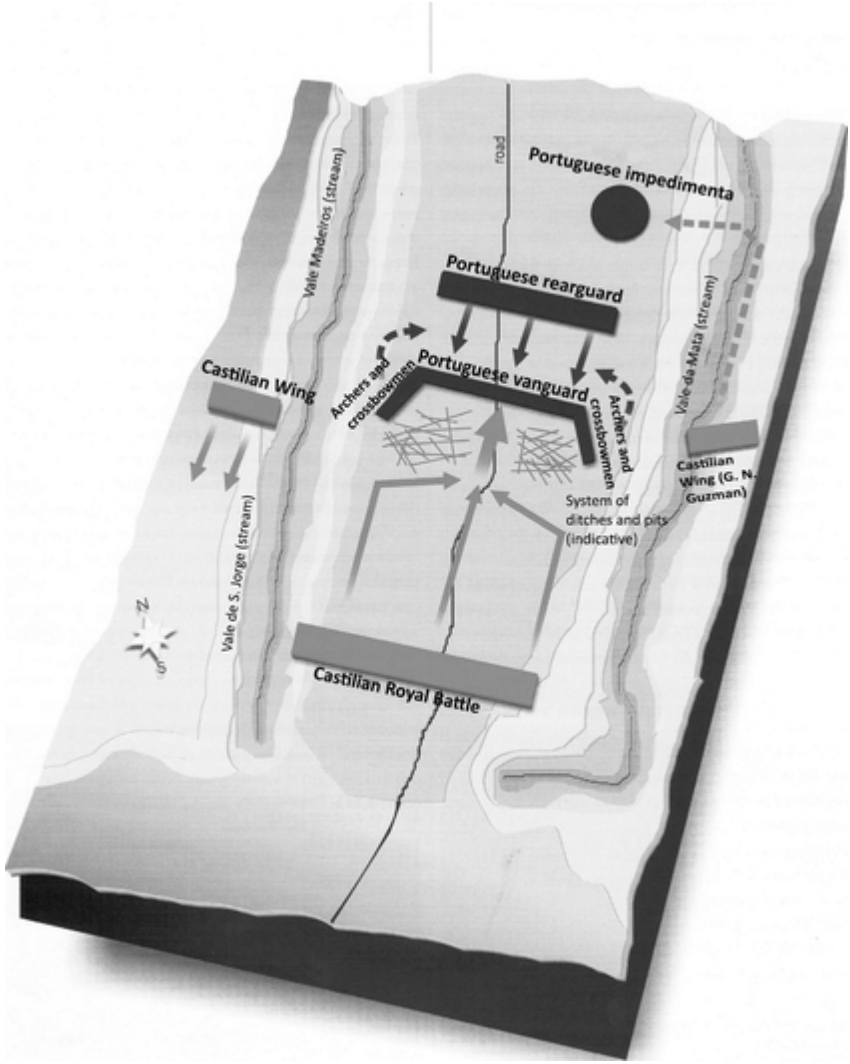

FIGURE 6.13 Battle of Aljubarrota, 1385 (2nd phase). (João Gouveia Monteiro, *Aljubarrota, 1385. A Batalha Real*. Lisbon: Tribuna da História, 2003, p.110)

Ceuta (1415)

According to the 15th-century chronicler Gomes Eanes de Zurara, the conquest of Ceuta began to be conceived long before 1415 and involved 20,000 men and more than 200 ships. The campaign was prepared in secret, involved advance spying on Ceuta, and was led by João I. The Portuguese fleet – with chartered vessels from Galicia, Biscay, England and Germany – set sail from Lisbon, on 25 July 1415, with almost all the royal court on board (including the king and

the *Infantes* Duarte, Pedro and Henrique) and anchored at Lagos (in the Algarve) one or two days later. On 7 August, the fleet departed from Faro and crossed the Strait during the night. On the 10th, it anchored in the bay of Algeciras, ready to carry out the attack (Duarte 2015). This took place on the 12th, but did not go well, because many ships were swept away in the direction of Malaga. João I and the rest of the fleet dropped anchor north of Ceuta, but the weather conditions and the reaction of the Moors led the monarch to take the fleet south (to the bay of 'Barbaçote'). However, the sea did not offer the conditions for a massed attack on the city and, on the 15th or 16th, the fleet returned to Algeciras. On 20 August, a royal council scheduled an attack on Ceuta for the next day.

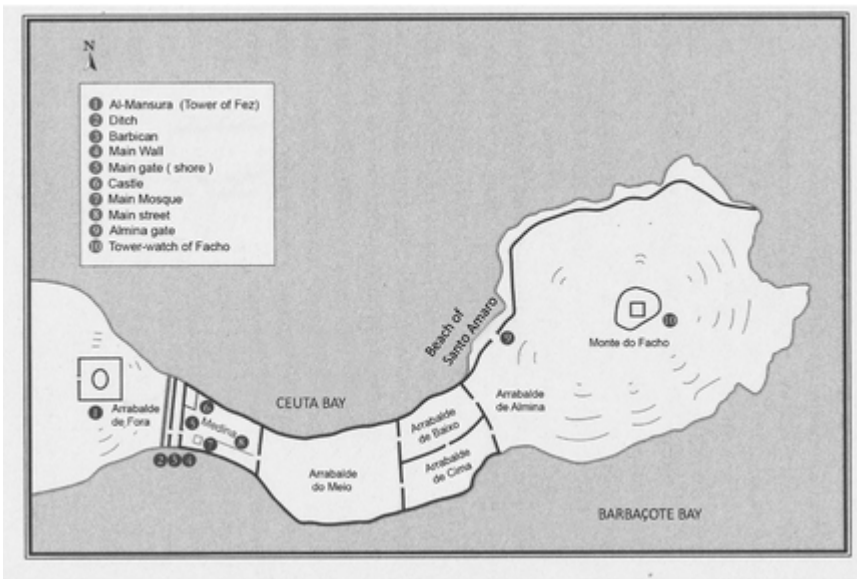

FIGURE 6.14 The Ceuta merínida, 1415. (João Gouveia Monteiro and António Martins Costa, *1415. A conquista de Ceuta*. Lisboa, Manuscrito, 2015, p. 49. Authors' diagram)

The monarch decided to concentrate the attack on the eastern part, in the area of Almina, so as not to be forced to simultaneously confront the Moors of Ceuta and those who could arrive rapidly from the outside. Thus, the *Infante* Henrique, with a part of the fleet, approached Almina, anchoring on the beach of Santo Amaro. Meanwhile, the monarch, with the rest of the fleet, headed in the direction of the South Bay, to divide the Muslim forces. At a certain point, the king would give a signal and Henrique and his men would land on the beach of Santo Amaro; the rest of the fleet would then join them. In this way, the Portuguese attack would focus on the port of Almina to the north-east, and then would try to go to the west, up to the castle, through the interior streets of the city. On the other side, the Moors' plan was to fight the Portuguese on

the beach.

On 21 August, the fleet advanced towards Ceuta. Early in the morning, the galleys of the *Infante* Henrique advanced towards Almina. However, the men could not bear to wait for the king's signal and headed to the beach before time. When he realized this, *Infante* Duarte left his father and joined his brother. Suddenly, there were 150 Christians on the beach of Santo Amaro fighting with the Moors. The latter were unable to contain them and retreated to the Gate of Almina, but they could not shut the gates: along with the *Infantes*, close to 500 fighters entered the suburbs of Almina. On hearing this, the *alcaide* Salah ibn Salah fled. The attack then developed from the east to the west, seeking to reach the castle and the tower of Fez. The king's fleet also gradually reached the beach of Santo Amaro. By early afternoon, the Christian forces advanced, divided into three columns, and tried to take the high points of the city. The Moors reacted by hurling projectiles from the top of the walls and the houses.

Halfway through the afternoon, the *Infants* were near the medina – close to the castle – waging fierce hand-to-hand fighting with the Moors. By late afternoon, the Christian victory was ensured and the king commanded that they met in a mosque. This was where they learned that the castle had been abandoned, so it was immediately occupied. All that was left was the attack on the great tower of Fez, which led to violent clashes. Once this had been conquered, they took care of guarding the city, which had been abandoned by the final combatants. It was half past seven in the afternoon and the conquest had been consummated. It remained to celebrate the triumph and pillage the city.

III The 16th Century (1495–1600)

A the War on Land

Luís Costa e Sousa

Political outline

The 16th century was remarkably peaceful within Portugal's European borders, as successive marriages between the Iberian princes tightened the ties

between Portugal and Spain. Portugal was able to concentrate its limited military resources on carving out an 'overseas empire', but old rivalries did not vanish. Iberian overseas expansion developed in close competition between the two kingdoms. The Tordesillas Treaty (1494) resolved claims over the 'New World' after the Columbus voyage, and the Sintra Treaty (1509) drew areas of influence in western Morocco. There was one other serious conflict over the possession of the Moluccas Islands, and the issue was clearly resolved in favour of Spain – even though the Zaragoza Treaty (1529) recognized the Portuguese claims over the *ilhas das especiarias*, it also determined that Portugal had to pay a considerable amount of money to the Spanish crown to keep them.

This showed the true importance of the rise of Spain as the European superpower and, in time, would lead to the absorption of Portuguese territory. Family links would favour the union of both crowns, as almost happened after the death of all nine potential successors to the late King João III, but a new heir was born in 1554. However, the young prince could not occupy the throne, so Spanish influence had a chance to flourish during the regency of Catarina, widow of the late João III (1521–1557). When Sebastião took the throne, he wasted no time and imposed his own authority. It was impossible to afford the cost of maintaining a global empire that ranged from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and the *Cortes* of 1562–1563 favoured a return to North African expansion, a decision enthusiastically supported by the Portuguese king. He would take advantage of the civil war that had started in 1574 to take down the Saadi dynasty, but, on the opposite side, King Felipe II of Spain was undertaking secret negotiations with the Ottomans.

The 'Iberian Union' finally came after the death of King Sebastião in battle, at Alcácer Quibir (1578). As he had no heir, the elder cardinal António briefly followed. King Felipe II of Spain was in an advantageous position, but the late king's cousin, António, also claimed the throne. Taking advantage of a widespread demoralization and, perhaps more importantly, benefiting from a network of sympathizers, Spain invaded Portugal. The kingdom fell in a swift two-month campaign led by the most renowned Spanish commanders, the Marquis de Santa Cruz and the Duke of Alba, which ended in the Battle of Alcântara, at the gates of Lisbon (25 August 1580). António fled to France and organized the resistance in the Azores. As a result, it took three more years, and as many expeditions, for Felipe II to subdue the final resistance at *Ilha Terceira* (1583). António still managed to avoid being captured and maintained his influence over the later years of the century, landing with Drake/Norris's expedition of 1589. After his death in 1595, his son Manuel would take part in the Earl of Essex's expedition that attacked Cadiz and pillaged the Portuguese city of Faro (1596).

Fortifications and siege operations

The conquest of Ceuta (1415), the first successful and permanent deployment outside Portugal's European borders, is seen as the starting point for Portuguese overseas expansion. Turning attention to the sea meant a true departure from the European battlefield, allowing Portugal to concentrate on developing a naval and amphibious kind of warfare. The projection of military force across the oceans would benefit from two main aspects, a strong naval capacity and major strategic coastal settlements (Rodrigues 1999: 198–223). Military architecture would, thus, play a crucial role in the overseas operations.

As key places had to be tightly secured, new architectural designs would make a welcomed appearance in Portugal. Low-profile round bastions were built in the Moroccan city of Safim, as the architect, Diogo de Arruda, had probably worked with Sangallo in Naples, c.1485–1486 (Moreira 1989: 91–142). These strongholds would be widely used for two or three decades and implemented within the North African frontier and in the most important places in the East. Francisco de Holanda's drawings (c.1538–1540) were the first depictions of the new angular bastions and, from the 1540s onwards, this design would progressively emerge in most new works. By the second half of the century, angular fortifications were fully established both in practice and in the few Portuguese theoretical texts on the subject.

Most of the Portuguese military activity took place around fortresses, being either amphibious assaults or defensive operations. One of the most emblematic sieges took place at Mazagão, in 1562 (from 2 February to 7 May). The city was considered impregnable, being completely enclosed within a modern angular squared circuit. However, one of the bastions still lacked its defensive moat, the *baluarte do Espírito Santo*, so the moors focused their efforts there, building an earth bastion with two heavy gun batteries. Two defensive operations are particularly well documented, counter-mining and counter-battery fire, led by the architect/ military engineer Isidoro de Almeida. On the Muslim side, the siege works were probably carried out by a Spanish renegade, Antonio de Longronho.

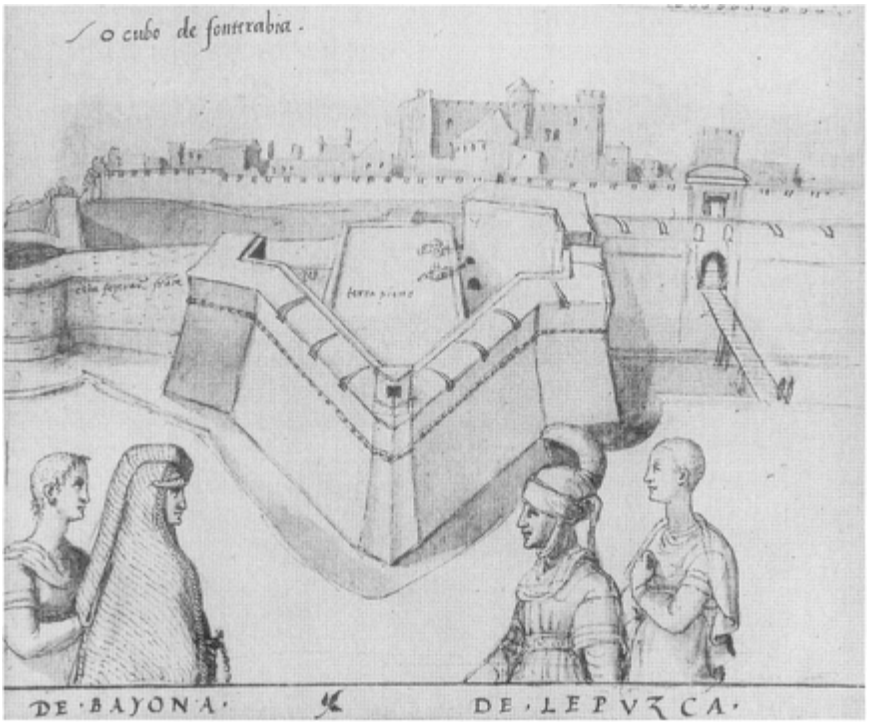

FIGURE 6.15 Francisco de Holanda (c.1538–1540), *Álbum dos Desenhos das Antigualhas* (Livros Horizonte, 1989, p.*42r.*)

Counter-battery fire took place after one month of continuous bombardment that demolished a significant part of the *baluarte* (see Glossary): part of the curtain on 10 April, shortly followed by the upper work (the *cavaleiro*) on the 13th. On the next day, Isidoro de Almeida put four heavy guns into position – *meios-camelos* – like the *trabucos* (see Glossary), with a high firing angle, which successfully dismantled the enemy pieces.

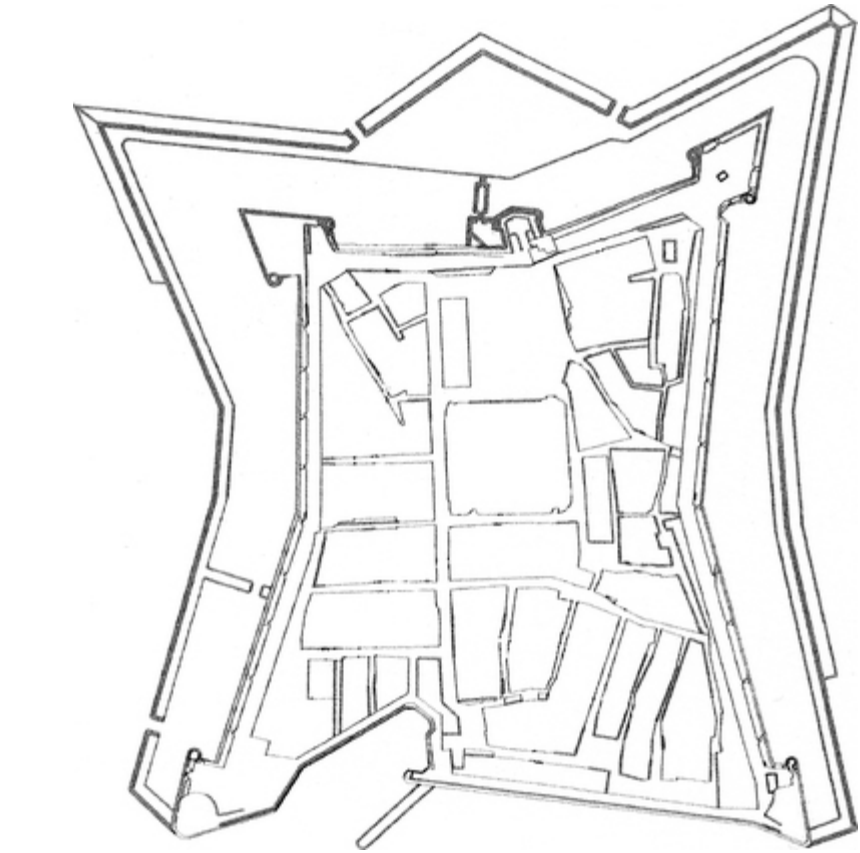

FIGURE 6.16 Mazagão Fortress, Benedetto de Ravenna/Miguel de Arruda (1541–1542). (Authors' diagram after plan by Jorge Correia)

Enemy mining was heard approaching the heavily damaged *baluarte* on the 12th, which triggered the counter-mining operations. After determining the position of the mines, Almeida redirected the counter-mining. On the night of the 15th and during the next day, two underground battles took place amongst the flooded vaults, in which the enemy was driven away.

Assaults were met by the soldiers positioned along the main curtains, supported by offensive use of mining. On 17 April, a heavy bombardment pounded the battered *baluarte* until about 11.00, followed by a furious assault. An accidental explosion put the defenders in peril, but Almeida ordered that the powder in the mine be ignited. As the ground fell under the blast, huge flames erupted, burning many of the attackers. The fighting lasted another four hours but with decreasing intensity. On the 30th, after some reconnaissance sorties and extensive siege work, another general assault was launched, but again it failed due to the same defensive stratagem. Finally, on 7 May, the Muslim army abandoned the siege.

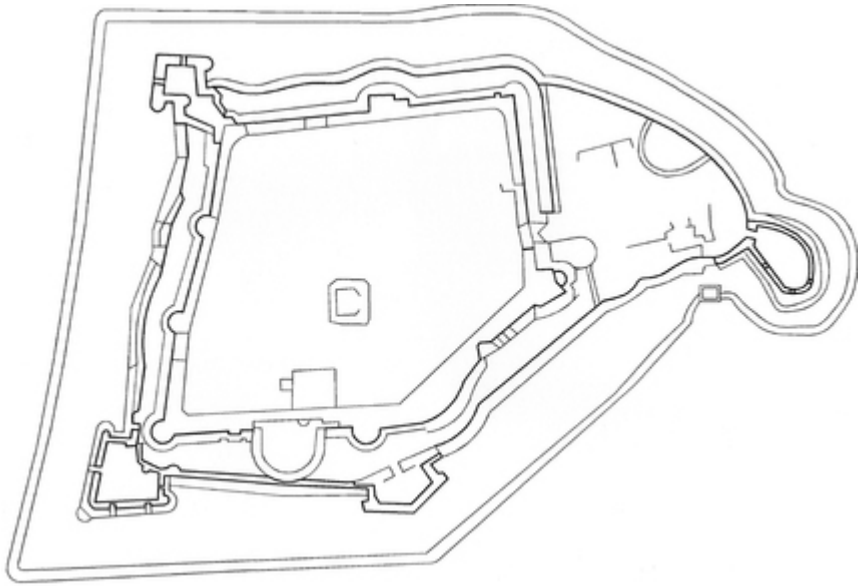

FIGURE 6.17 Bahrain Fortress, Onofre de Carvalho (c.1586). (Authors' diagram)

Other operations played a crucial role during sieges, such as ground sorties. Some of these would have a greater magnitude than mere skirmishes with specific objectives. During the second siege of Diu (1546), a major sortie took place with troops arranged in regular formations, like an ordinary field of battle.

Logistics and recruitment

The problem of deploying soldiers to India was met each year by organizing fleets. However, the ships' limited space to carry soldiers and the heavy toll that these long voyages took on human lives, would limit the manpower available for operations. Nevertheless, some operations could have a greater magnitude, particularly in Morocco. Some 20,000 men were assembled for the conquest of Azamor (1514), including more than 3,000 cavalry. This huge army disembarked at Mazagão and marched 20 kilometres in full battle order, protected by the fleet, thus solving the logistical problems associated with an amphibious operation involving so many soldiers.

In Ethiopia, the logistical challenge was greater, as the army conducted a distant two-year campaign (1541–1543). The military contingent was relatively small, 600 men, and all supplies and weapons – including some artillery pieces – were carried on specially made carts that could also be used in combat armed with guns. For the Moroccan expedition of 1578, the lack of

standardized equipment was overcome by acquiring all weapons and ammunition in Flanders, including all the body armour necessary to equip the Portuguese soldiers. Five hundred carts were built especially for carrying all the baggage (*carriagem*). Field encampments were also not neglected, and three military engineers supervised their arrangement, using some 'portable trenches' to reinforce defences.

FIGURE 6.18 Ar tillery piece positioned for indirect fire. (Nicolo Tartaglia, *Quesiti et Inventioni Diverse* (1554), p. 6v. Courtesy of ETH-Bibliothek, Zurich)

The ties between the Iberian monarchies favoured the introduction of Spanish military influences in the organization of Portuguese land forces. Pedro de Navarro (c.1460 to 28 August 1528) joined the besieged garrison of Asilah in 1508 and his Swiss mercenaries were the first soldiers in Morocco to fight in the European fashion. With no Portuguese-Spanish conflict, mobility

of military personnel would

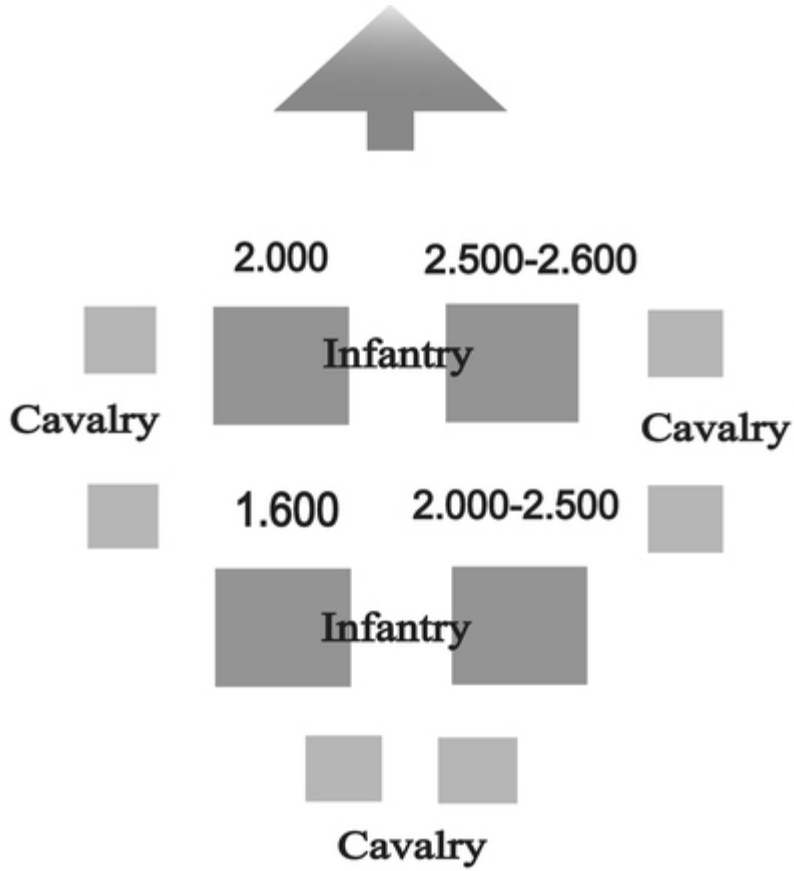

FIGURE 6.19 Order of battle for the conquest of Azamor (1513). (Authors' diagram)

be the norm during the whole century. However, the recruitment of soldiers presented a more complex problem, especially when it came to the establishment of permanent organizational structures. The Spanish military machine had begun with its European commitments. Portugal did not have such manpower needs, but the first cycle of aggressive expansion would favour the creation of similar military structures, even if they would have a short longevity. During the early expansion in North Africa (1508–1514) and with Afonso de Albuquerque's government in the East (1509–1515), permanent companies with an officer cadre attached (*ordenança* companies) were organized similarly to Spanish models, both with the king's militia as well as with the levies of the nobility. There was an anticlimax in 1513–1514. The defeat in Mamora (1514) stopped further expansion in North Africa and led to the interruption of military reforms, just as Albuquerque's successor had disbanded all the companies already created. Later, governors were ordered to

re-establish the system, but were met with the resistance of men and the scattered nature of the Portuguese overseas settlements. Nevertheless, records point to the existence of companies amongst the garrisons of Ceuta and Mazagão – the latter being created by the king's brother, the *Infante* Luís. The southernmost Portuguese villages of Alcantarilha, Pêras, Canelas and Lagoa had their own companies to repulse corsair attacks, such as that of 1559 (directed to Algarve). The northern town of Valença do Minho had two such companies, armed by the local working communities (*mecânicos*) which held regular training exercises.

A major reorganization of the militia took place during the controversial reign of Sebastião (1568–1578). Those reforms were a necessity, as pressure dramatically increased throughout the colonial territory, but they were also means to establish royal authority and its most significant function, namely the ability to wage war at the king's discretion. These were amongst his priorities, and in 1568, the new governor of India, Luís de Ataíde, received instructions to re-establish permanent companies in India. A few months later, a royal decree confirmed their establishment in the city of Oporto, followed by Lisbon in 1569. A general law extending compulsory recruitment to the whole country, the *Regimento dos capitães-mores* (1570), was modelled on the Spanish and Savoy systems, with the same organic arrangements and imposing similar regular training and periodic musters (*alardos*). There are scattered records of these musters in Oporto and Lisbon, and a detailed account for every major town of the South, providing a general picture for this region (Cascão 1984). After the 'Iberian Union', the whole of Portugal would become a frontier region, just like its southernmost part, following numerous alarms in which military conscription was imposed as a part of everyday life. To face the English invasion of 1589, some 12,000 men were put to arms, with the next major mobilization occurring in 1596. Those numbered far more than the 9,000 soldiers recruited from all over the country in 1578.

Theory and practice of war

The systematic emergence of Portuguese military literature was another important element which occurred during the last quarter of the 16th century. Half-a-dozen texts were published in less than a decade, mainly written by experienced men such as Martim Afonso de Melo (c.1567–1576), João da Fonseca (1573), Isidoro de Almeida (1573) and by the king himself (c.1574). During the 'Dual Monarchy', Portuguese military writers kept pace with their Spanish counterparts in terms of quality, even if they remained clearly behind

in quantity. Despite being absorbed by the mighty Spanish war machine, they claimed a military expertise of their own. One particular operational aspect was the command structure, something that was missing at both the tactical and strategic levels. The *Regimento* of 1570 determined the staff officer for each company, and three years later a *sargento-mor* was appointed to assist the military commander (*capitão-mor)* for the Algarve. This would prove to have a true impact on the organization of military assets in one of the most important sources of recruitment, and it was surely not a coincidence that the Alentejo and Algarve musters reviewed in 1573 fielded 120 companies with some 20,000 men.

Portuguese military literature distinguished between two types of warfare (Melo 1948: 318–382). The first type was fought against 'men with guns and well-armed people', following European standards. During the combat around Benasterim, eight companies of *ordenança* (see Glossary) soldiers fought organized into *esquadrões* (see Glossary). One of these had a unique galley-like configuration that would later be represented in the well-known Italian military treatise of Giovan Mattheo Cicogna (1567). The Portuguese manuals also described regular formations both in the text like those of Isidoro de Almeida (1573) and Luís Álvaro Seco (1597), and the images (Diogo Álvares Correia c.1560–1570). The visual appearance of soldiers and horsemen is also detailed in contemporary iconography, showing the use of armour, pikes and firearms, just as elsewhere in Europe.

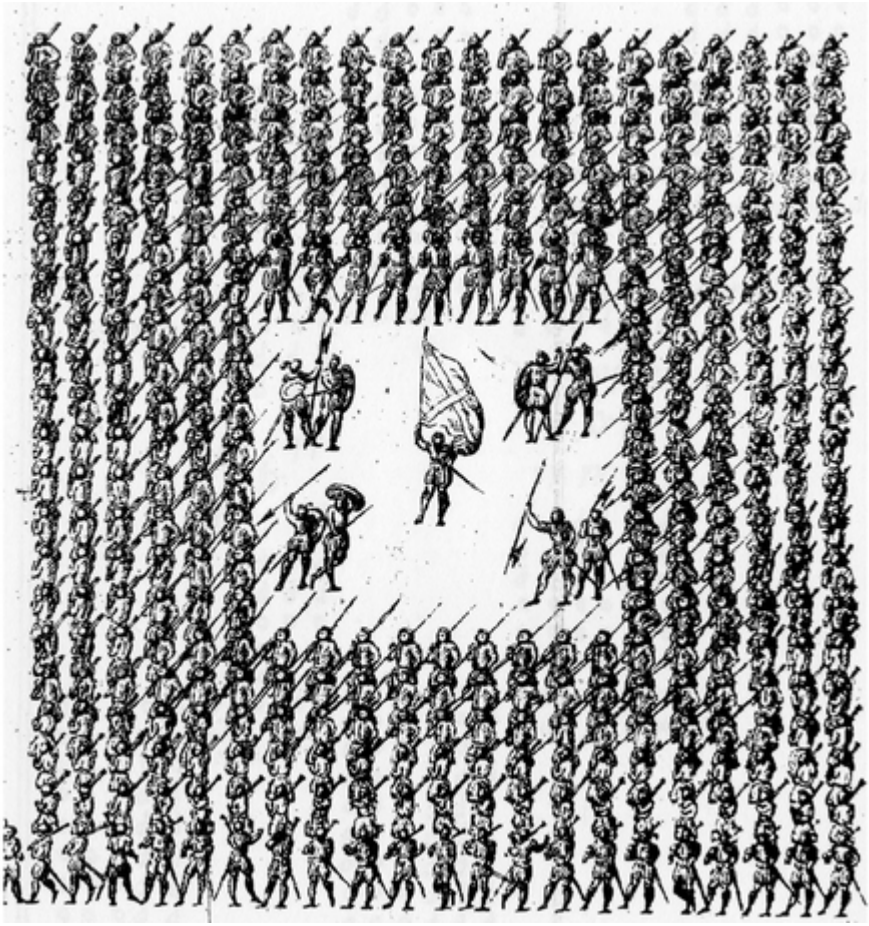

FIGURE 6.20 Battle formation – the *esquadrão* – Diogo Álvares Correia (c.1576). (Cod. 2107, p. 65, courtesy of BNP—Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal)

FIGURE 6.21 'P or tuguese pik emen, *arquebusiers* and horseman', Miguel Leitão de Andrada, 'Miscellanea', engraving 1629, detail. (Courtesy of Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal)

The other kind of war was described as 'against unarmed people', and would take place in North Africa and the Orient, with the Atlantic region added at a later stage. As the enemy usually fielded large armies, many firearms would be required to engage it from a longer distance, so a short reinforcement of pikes would be sufficient for protecting the soldiers equipped with firearms. The contingent was made of arquebusiers, who were deployed at the vanguard in three lines: the first kneeling, the second standing and the third occupying the intervals between the other two. The discharge was given simultaneously as a massive volley to break the enemy's momentum, followed by a furious charge

that would – hopefully – make the enemy disperse; the use of the crossbow was also advocated for the soldiers in the rear of the *esquadrão* to support the hand-to-hand fighting within the first ranks. In advocating such operational use of firearms, Portuguese manuals were unique amongst contemporary European military writings, and inevitable variations are also evident in some Portuguese sources. In the Battle of Salga in the Azores (1581), the equipment of the Portuguese soldiers – firearms, swords and shields – was different from that of the specialized pike/arquebus-armed Spaniards. This doubleweapons style was already described at Surrate (1530) – after delivering a massive volley, the soldiers handed the firearms to their 'slaves' (*escravos*) and attacked with spears (Correia 1975: 347) – one of these slaves was depicted on the iconography known as 'João de Castro's tapestries'.

The two sides of the Atlantic

The 'Dual Monarchy' presented an occasion for the Portuguese to develop an already original military approach, which is paradoxical, as one could expect that the Spanish influence would prevail over any of those particularities. Local warriors with specific fighting traditions were employed in every operational theatre, not only to overcome limited resources, but also because tactics had to be adapted to different military environments. The Portuguese only had a residual presence in North Africa, and, with the East already steadily decaying, the two sides of the Atlantic were going to play a decisive role in shaping the officer cadre that would ensure the next batch of military reforms.

Angola had been a territory almost ignored for colonization until the appointment of Paulo Dias de Novais as *capitão donatário* (1575–1589). Novais had been held in captivity by the N'gola leader some 14 years earlier, and the collaboration with the indigenous warriors reflected his profound knowledge of the region around Luanda. Adapting tactics would be the norm, as in the Battle of Casicola (25 August 1585). The triple battle order of N'dongo warriors faced 130 Europeans and some 8,000 African archers in a similar formation, who won a major victory.

The veteran Luís Serrão (1589–1591) assembled a considerable army of 120 Europeans and some 1,000 Africans. An unsuccessful combat followed in N'goleme a-Kitambo, but the withdrawal was surprisingly orderly. The Portuguese organized a defensive array where the African allies sheltered, and marched for 15 days,

FIGURE 6.22 P or tuguese *slave*, Flemish tapestries of João de Castro. (c.1558–1560, canvas 10: 'Triumphal Entry into Goa'–detail) (KHM—Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)

covering more than 300 kilometres in strict formation. The battle order was reminiscent of Afonso de Melo's recommendations, with a substantial contingent of shooters at the vanguard to keep the enemy at bay.

The first governor of Brazil, Tomé de Sousa (1549–1553), established a

pattern of alliances with the Brazilian Indians. They were organized into companies of local warriors commanded by a captain, usually the village chieftain (Puntoni 1992). The main military engagements were fought against the French colony founded in 1555 at Rio de Janeiro by Nicholas Villegaignon, baptized as *France Antartique*, with native Brazilian allies on both sides. São Paulo was besieged by the French and their Tupi allies in 1564. In 1567, an army of Portuguese and native Brazilian troops, including an ethnically mixed unit commanded by the Jesuit priest José de Anchieta, delivered the final onslaught. In fact, the Jesuits played a vital role as negotiators and in leading troops in the field.

Ethiopia, 1541–1543

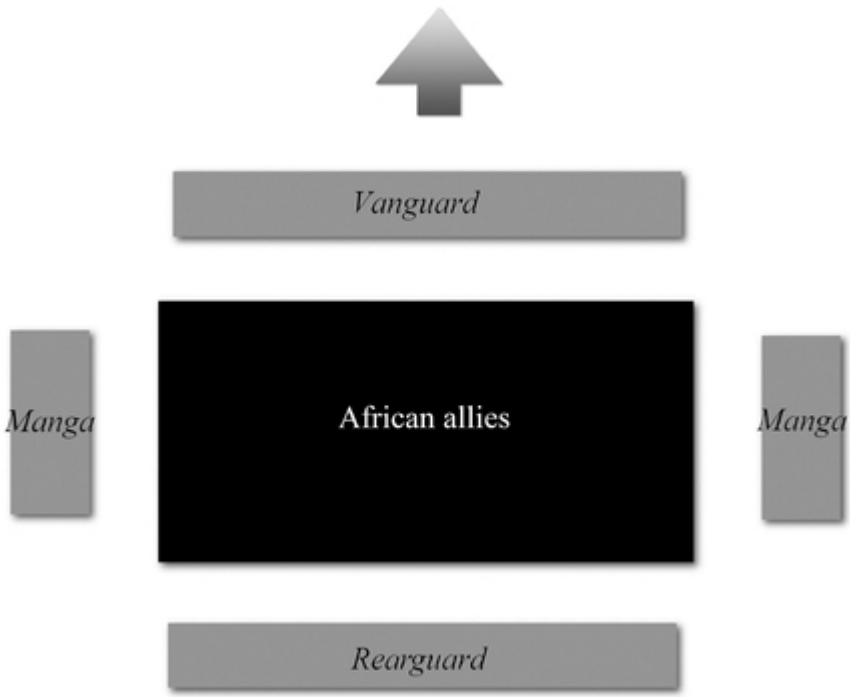

FIGURE 6.23 Battle array for marching, Angola (29 December 1589 to 15 January 1590). (Authors' diagram)

On 9 June 1541, some 400 men led by Cristóvão da Gama, son of Vasco da Gama, began a two-year-long campaign in Ethiopia, to assist the Christians against the forces of the Sultanate of Adal. In mid-December 1541, after careful preparation that included the construction of some 50 carts to carry all the baggage and munitions, the troops reached their first objective, the plateau of

Amba Sanayt. Three columns of men armed with arquebuses and lances carried out the assault in three different directions, each supported by a quick-firing field artillery battery.

About a month later, Portuguese and Muslims clashed in the vicinity of Antalo (Hintalo). Gama deployed his forces in a mobile battle formation, with carts equipped with artillery pieces in the front and five *esquadrões* in an inverted crescent formation in the rear. The soldiers were kept in their positions through strict discipline of fire, engaging the enemy at a distance. The Muslims under Ahmad Gran were defeated twice (4 and 9 April 1542) with the same tactics, as they had no opposing firepower.

After these humiliating defeats, the Muslims requested reinforcements from the pasha of Yemen, and the new army encamped in Ofla, near Lake Ashangi. As the Portuguese arrived, they tried to contact the forces of King Claudius (Galawdewos) of Ethiopia. Meanwhile, another strategic point was taken (26–27 August), located in the Simien Mountains, and converted to a place for equipment storage, including for some 100 firearms. The Battle of Ofla followed (28 August), fought with the Portuguese on the defensive. Despite establishing a strong fortified position, the enemy now possessed field artillery, including some heavy guns, and 1,000 Turkish hand gunners. The trenches were demolished by cannon fire, and while the Christians launched successful limited counterattacks, casualties mounted and soldiers disbanded. Cristóvão da Gama was eventually captured and executed, and the army scattered.

The fugitives gathered the weapons stored at Simien Mountains and manufactured gunpowder with saltpetre and sulphur discovered on the site. A few months later, a new Portuguese/Abyssinian army soundly defeated the Muslim troops at Waine Dega (21 February 1543). Ahmad Gran was shot by a Portuguese soldier.

Alcácer Quibir (4 August 1578)

The Battle of Alácer Quibir was the last episode of the war of succession to the Saadi throne, disputed between Muhammad al-Mutawakkil and his uncle Abd al-Malik (1574–1578). After the Spanish refusal to provide any help to al-Mutawakkil – Felipe II was secretly negotiating a truce with Turkey – the Portuguese took the opportunity to carry out a military intervention. The mobilization started in 1577, but the preparations dragged on for a year and a half, meeting with Spain's somewhat veiled opposition. The fleet finally set sail on 25 June 1578 and, after delays resulting from the lack of sufficient transport ships, arrived at Asilah on 11 July after a brief stop at Tangier. As the promised

50 Spanish galleys did not materialize, the main objective – the corsair port of Larache – had to be reached by land. Another delay followed until the arrival of the baggage carts, and the army began a 50-kilometre-long arduous march only on 28 July. On 3 August, some 5,000 cavalry trying to ambush the rearguard after the fording of the River Makhazem were repulsed by artillery and musket fire, and an hour later the two armies met for the first time. The Christians spent the night in relative calm, as they were encamped in an entrenched position on the top of a hill. Finally, in the early hours of 4 August 1578, the troops assembled. After two or three hours, the Portuguese took the field following a small dry riverbed that protected their right flank.

Ahead were the 50,000 men of Abd al-Malik deployed in Ottoman fashion: 16,000 infantry in front equipped with firearms, mostly arquebuses, flanked with some 1,000 selected cavalry. The 24 artillery pieces were hidden and covered with vegetation – an early example of the use of camouflage – on top of a hill. From behind its cover, approximately 20,000 riders would emerge from both sides to envelop the enemy. The Portuguese army was divided into three lines, maintaining much of its marching order: in the vanguard there were 1,400 *aventureiros* (see Glossary) and two *mangas* (see Glossary) (each with 500 arquebusiers), with 11 Spanish companies (2,100 men) on the left, and the German mercenaries (12 companies, 2,800 men) on the right; on the second line were two Portuguese *terços* (see Glossary) deployed in one *esquadrão* (20 companies, some 5,000 men); and the two remaining *terços de ordenança* and some 500 musketeers defended the rearguard. The cavalry battalions occupied each flank, 600 heavy horse on the left – the most exposed position – commanded by the king (Sousa 2016).

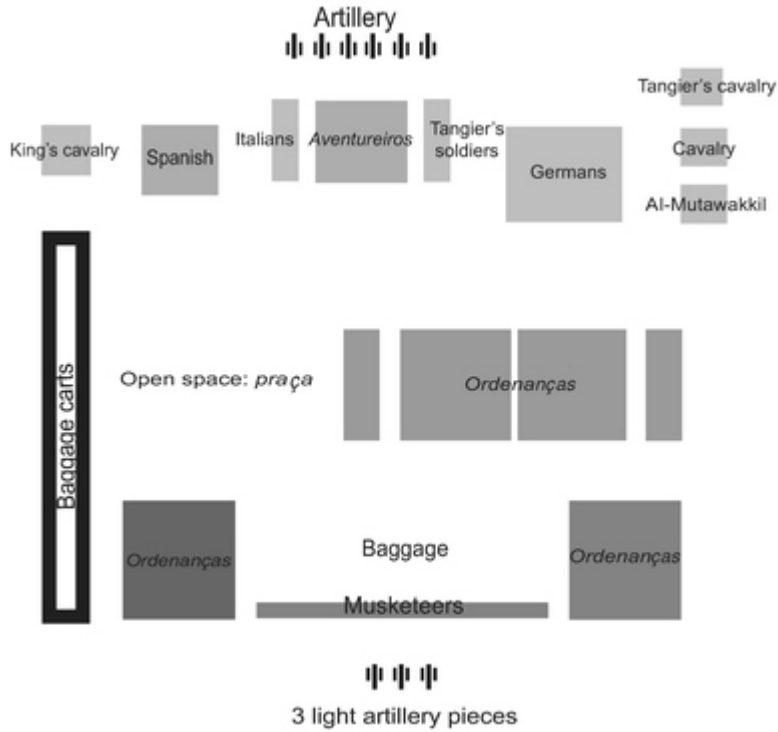

FIGURE 6.24 Portuguese order of battle at Alcácer Quibir, 4 August 1578. (Authors' diagram)

Within half a mile of the enemy, the Portuguese stopped and moved to arrange the definitive battle order. Spirits were uneasy, fearing a sudden attack before troops could deploy as planned, so it was decided that the rearguard would keep its positions. The vanguard had restarted moving when the unspotted artillery fired; this signalled the attack and the cavalry charged the rear. The surprised Portuguese brought their guns to the front, while the first arquebus discharges took place. Sebastião went to the rear to encourage his men, and after returning decided it was time to take the initiative. Two messengers sent to the opposite flank (calling for the advance) failed to return. However, the *aventureiros* lowered their pikes to advance, and the king attacked in their support. The first line advanced, pushing back the enemy, and as its centre/left gave way, the command post was exposed; Abd al-Malik died while trying to rally the retreating troops.

As victory seemed within the grasp of the Portuguese, the Moroccan levies started to pillage the baggage. However, the colonel of the *aventureiros* was badly injured by a cannon shot. Despite his orders to carry on with the attack, his sergeant, Pero Lopes, stopped the advancing men. The *sharif's* personal bodyguard launched a counterattack that pushed the enemy into disorderly retreat, right into their second line. Two counterattacks led by Sebastião

restored the situation, but a false alarm in the rear ranks divided the already depleted cavalry forces, leading to their destruction. The king was wounded but continued to fight, despite being urged to abandon the field. As the battle came to its end (c.4:00–5:00 am), he led a last cavalry charge, broke through the enemy ranks, and tried to escape, but was eventually caught and killed by his captors. The death toll reached some 15,000, with more than two-thirds of them Christians.

B Naval War

Vítor Luís Gaspar Rodrigues

Political outline

The turn of the 15th century into the 16th marks the beginning of the Portuguese expansion process in the East, with the transfer of a very significant part of Portuguese naval military power to the Indian Ocean, turning it into the main stage of naval battles fought by the Portuguese throughout the 16th century. The Portuguese naval superiority in the Indian Ocean was founded on a long period of apprenticeship in the Atlantic. For approximately one century, the Portuguese had undertaken successive technical transformations of their sailing ships – *caravelas* (see Glossary) and *naus* (see Glossary), which, after being armed with heavy deck guns, became powerful warships. At the same time, as a result of the naval war against North European and North African plundering as well as piracy both in the Strait of Gibraltar and on the coasts of Portugal, the Portuguese developed and perfected new naval and amphibious warfare practices, which proved to be fundamental to their military supremacy in the Indian Ocean.

Although the first reference to *trons* and *bombardas* in small Portuguese ships operating in the Strait of Gibraltar dates from 1416, and it is known that since 1445 there were *caravelas* equipped with some weaponry, these were of small calibre and limited range. As of 1471, by assignment of Prince João, the *caravelas* were deployed with larger cannons and thus turned into fearsome warships. In fact, although the *caravelas* were strong, very fast and very weatherly, they were rather vulnerable in the event of ship boarding, because of their low freeboards. Only their heavy guns aboard – with 16-cm calibre and two-metre chamberless barrels – mounted amidships, allowed them to attack the enemy vessels while preventing them from approaching. These

heavy guns, widely known as *camelos* and *cameletes*, fired stone projectiles. In their larger versions (18 to 23-cm calibre and approximately three-metre-long barrels) they would eventually equip the *naus* that would also be decisive in the first phase of military control in the Indian Ocean. João II also created the first bronze weaponry foundries and promoted the manufacture of wrought-iron weaponry and, in 1489, he created the first body of naval artillerymen. The first firing exercises practised with large *bombardas* placed in '*caravelas* and small ships' and firing 'at the waterline' date from that time. These transformations led to a true revolution in naval combat methods, resulting in important technical and tactical innovations, which undermined the generally accepted principles for war at sea, and marked the beginning of a preponderance of ships armed with artillery (Rubim 1990: 27–41; Santos 1999: 48–65; Guilmartin Jr. 2002: 86–87).

The supremacy of Portuguese sea power in the Indian Ocean: a technological and tactical revolution

The inability of the agents of King Manuel I to interfere in the maritime trade circuits of the Indian Ocean controlled by Muslim merchants forced the Portuguese to take on a belligerent attitude. In 1500, the sending of a powerful fleet to the Indian Ocean commanded by Pedro Álvares Cabral, who bombarded Kozhikode (Calicut), marked the moment when the Portuguese implemented a revolutionary naval combat tactic. Instead of the traditional frontal-attack boarding, the outcome of the naval battles became dependent on the relationship between the manoeuvrability of their ships, especially the *caravelas*, and the firepower of their weaponry.

The king expressly instructed Cabral 'neither to attack any ships of the Moors from Mecca by frontal attack nor to board them, unless absolutely necessary, but to force them to surrender through his artillery fire instead, because this way would make it possible to conduct the war with greater safety for and less damage to his ships' crews'. This directive established Portuguese naval combat strategy in the Indian Ocean during the first decade of the 16th century. Aware of the superiority of the Asian fleets in terms of numbers of ships and crew, the Portuguese conducted naval combat at a distance, by combining the firepower of their cannons with the manoeuvring of their sailing ships, especially their *caravelas*. Equipped with a crew which was experienced and seaworthy through being accustomed to the difficult conditions in the Atlantic, and with an artillery clearly superior to that used by the Eastern fleets, the Portuguese *armadas* kept the enemy at a distance, thus

avoiding being approached. It was only after destroying a large part of the military capacity of these fleets, with the use of artillery and breaking the heart and courage of the opposing fighters, that the Portuguese made their approach and boarded ships.

In most naval battles, the Portuguese sought to remain in the open sea, positioning themselves on the windward side of the enemy ships to avoid being approached, given their small ship crews and the impossibility of replacing them. When the battle was fought in a more restricted space, as occurred in 1501 at the Bay of Kannur with João da Nova's four ships, the captain ordered his skippers 'to resist with artillery so that the Muslim fleet did not reach them' (Castanheda 1979: I, 96). The ships were positioned in such a way that the heavy guns on deck could simultaneously shoot over a hundred enemy sails which, with no weaponry, sought to approach them in closed ranks, thus becoming an easy target for the experienced Portuguese artillerymen. With a significant part of the Malabar fleet destroyed, the remaining ships retreated.

Because of their higher-quality naval ordnance, soon the Portuguese used a new naval combat tactic in the Indian Ocean, attack in a squadron-column, which eventually proved equally important for the rapid assertion of their naval supremacy. Actually, the first use of the ships in combat, 'one after the other lined astern', launching successive volleys of artillery fire against the opposing ships, either larboard or starboard, dates back to February 1502. In that year, the squadron of *caravelas* commanded by Vicente Sodré and the *naus* of the 'Carreira' commanded by Vasco da Gama, when attacked by a large fleet from Kozhikode, immediately adopted the column formation aiming to fight at a distance with artillery. This resulted in the destruction of a large number of *paraus* and Malabarian ships, which were very fragile, since their planks were sewn and not nailed together, and thus vulnerable to the shells of the Portuguese artillery.

Along with the implementation of these revolutionary naval combat tactics, the Portuguese, to minimize casualties among their soldiers, maintained on the upper deck only the sailors necessary to manoeuvre the ship and artillerymen to operate the weaponry, thus keeping the soldiers protected on the lower decks. These intervened only in the final stages of the fighting to seize and loot the immobilized ships. In addition, unlike the Malabari warriors, the Portuguese benefited from fighting with defensive military equipment – helmets, cuirasses and shields. The support provided by the allied kingdoms of Malabar, especially Kochi, was likewise decisive, not only through the incorporation of men and small ships into the Portuguese fleets, but also through the transfer of knowledge on Indian warfare tactics, which eventually proved to be essential to stop the attacks launched in the first years by Samudri

Raja's armies in the rivers and lagoon areas around Kochi.

Diu: control of the Indian Ocean

The naval battles of Chaul (1508) and Diu (1509) marked the first moment when the Portuguese *Armada* in India fought a fleet composed of galleys and heavily armed seaworthy sailing ships, since they were built by Venetians at the order of the Mamelukes. The much-feared reply of the Mameluke Sultan took the form of a strong *armada* composed of 12 ships sent to the Arabian Sea.

The first battle took place on the Chaul River, and came to an end with the death of Captain Lourenço de Almeida and the defeat of his fleet. This naval battle was marked by the tactical inability of the two leaders in charge: the Egyptian admiral because, after a first attempt to approach the Portuguese ships, he ordered his ships, galleys included, to fight statically, chained to each other and with their pieces concentrated in the bow so as to try to stop the attack by the Portuguese navy; Lourenço because, instead of following the advice of Constable Michael Arnau, who argued for a short-range bombardment of the enemy *armada*, he chose to board the enemy ships out of prejudice (since a victory determined by cannon shots was neither honourable nor profitable). Both the larger size of the Egyptian ships and the fact that the river current made the approach manoeuvre enormously difficult, were decisive for the failure of the operation.

In Diu, Hussain's fleet consisted of 116 ships (10 sailing ships, six galleys, 30 Gujarati *fustas* (see Glossary) and 70 *paraus* from Kozhikode) equipped with 450 Mameluke soldiers and mercenaries and several thousand Gujaratis and Malabaris. The fleet led by Viceroy Francisco de Almeida consisted of 15 sailing ships (nine *naus*, four *caravelas*, two *caravelões*) and three rowing boats (two galleys and one *bergantim*) with 1,200 men, both soldiers and crew members. The superiority of his squadron of high-level ships was shown by its much larger number of artillery pieces, as well as gunpowder and projectiles. Hussain's rowing fleet, though much larger in number – 106 ships – was completely ineffective, not only because he had decided to fight with enchained galleys, but also because the Gujarati fleet virtually did not interfere in the battle, due to Malik Ayaz's betrayal.

Emir Hussain, with many of his ships shattered, especially the galleys, had chosen a static defence. He aligned them in pairs, in chains, with their sterns facing the land and the flagship in the middle, thus placing them under the protection of the fortress and the sea fort artillery. His strategy was to endure

the frontal attack of the Portuguese ships and to counterattack their flanks and rear with the *fustas* and the *paraus*. The viceroy, however, ordered the galleys to take the frontline, with the sailing ships in their wake formed in line. After a first swerve, the larger ships launched an artillery attack on each of the predefined targets at the shortest possible distance, with the Portuguese galleys and *caravelas* bombarding the Mameluke galleys on the right flank so as to avoid their artillery fire. Only then did the approach take place (Pissarra 2002: 33–62, 75–93; S. Monteiro 1989: 177–192). The action of the Portuguese artillerymen was also decisive, who sank two large sailing ships and caused great damage to the remaining ships of the fleet and numerous casualties among the crews, forcing Hussain to flee to solid ground. For a long time, the Portuguese stood out as the main naval power in the Indian Ocean.

Expansion and strengthening of the empire: repercussions on its naval structure

In order to exercise their naval power efficiently, the Portuguese needed naval bases located at strategic points in the Indian Ocean, where they could support their fleets logistically and technically, as in Kochi. Its conquest had been carried out by Afonso de Albuquerque, who, in 1510, had only 34 sailing ships and five paddle ships in the Indian Ocean. He managed, through difficult and complex amphibious operations, to seize Goa twice in that year, followed by the conquest of Malacca in 1511 and that of Ormuz in 1515, transforming the '*Estado da Índia*' into a coherently established and politically structured network, throughout the Indian Ocean.

As a result of the enlargement of the '*Estado da Índia*' to the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea and South-East Asia, Portuguese leaders, with Albuquerque at their head, soon became aware of the need to equip their fleets with *galés* and *galiotas*, as well as with small rowing boats – *bergantins*, *fustas*, *paraus* and *catures*, usually referred to as *fustalha*. The problem of a lack of rowers having been solved with the use of slaves, prisoners of war and, after the seizure of Goa, many local outcasts, the number of oar ships within the fleets increased significantly and therefore the first mixed fleets appeared, better fitted for combat near the coast.

The need to match local warfare methods and have ships that could combine the strength and fire power of the *naus* with the manoeuvrability and speed of the *caravelas*, led to the introduction of the *galeão* in the '*Armada da Índia*'. It came also as a result of the need to have sailing ships in the Indian Ocean capable of successfully confronting the emerging power of the Turks. The first

information about this warship in the East dates back to 1518, with its number increasing rapidly, from five units in 1520 (three of them built in India) to 11 in 1525, and some more being built in the eastern dockyards. Throughout the 16th century, galleons were the main sailing warships used by the Portuguese.

The typological change of the Portuguese fleets in the East resulted, on the one hand, from the enlargement of the dominated area, which required a much larger number of ships and, on the other hand, from the change of naval strategy of the eastern powers, which, in view of the superiority of the Portuguese fleets and their weaponry, began to avoid naval combat on the high seas, bringing them nearer the coast or to river estuaries. In 1522, as a result of this adjustment, the 42 rowing vessels of the *Armada da Índia* already made up 48.8 per cent of its total, eventually rising to 60 units in 1525 (60 per cent of the *Armada*). As of that date, mainly due to the action of the governors Henrique de Menezes and Lopo Vaz de Sampaio, the number of *fustas* in the *Armada da Índia*, and small local vessels (e.g. *paraus*, *calaluzes*, *lancharas*, or *balões*) increased extraordinarily, many of them captured from the eastern fleets and later reinforced so as to accommodate small and medium-sized weaponry. They were intended for so-called 'estuary warfare', fought along the coast, within the rivers or in the lagoon areas around Kochi, for example. As they were quicker and easier to build, and with much lower maintenance costs, these small ships fitted better into the social organization of the Portuguese in India, because they allowed a greater number of noblemen to be awarded captainships.

With the growth of the empire as a result of the increasing number of strongholds, the number of ships that made up the *Armada da Índia* had also increased exponentially. In the late 1530s, while the Portuguese Empire was achieving its greatest splendour, the *fustalha* represented more than three-quarters of the nearly 300 Portuguese ships operating in the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. As for the sailing ships, their number tended to remain the same until the mid-1550s, due to the need to prevent a possible Ottoman attack on the *Estado da Índia*.

The decline of the *Armada de Alto-bordo* in the East: its consequences

In August 1554, in the Gulf of Oman, a Portuguese mixed fleet fought the Ottoman galleys of Seydi Ali Reis. That naval battle confirmed the superiority of the Portuguese *galeões* and *caravelas* over the Turkish galleys (which were routed and obliged to take refuge in the Surat), and marked the moment when

the decrease of the number of sailing ships in the *Armada da Índia* was accentuated. Indeed, the end of the Ottoman threat in the Arabian Sea and the worsening financial problems of the Portuguese Empire led it to make a sharp disinvestment in its sailing vessels in terms of both crew and number of ships. The result of this disinvestment was that, by the end of 1560, there were only 20 sailing ships in the East (Pissarra 2001: 260).

As a result of these transformations, the regular fleets organized annually in Goa, such as the extraordinary *armadas*, experienced a substantial decrease in the number of *galeões*. At the same time, the major shipyards of the '*Estado da Índia*' were now almost exclusively engaged in the building of small ships and occasionally a few *galés*. Between 1591 and 1596, of the 660 vessels fitted for the different Portuguese fleets in the Indian Ocean, only 18 were *galeões*, i.e. on average three *galeões* per year. On the other hand, for the same period, 60 galleys (10 per year) and 582 small rowing and sailing ships (97 per year) were fitted (Rodrigues 2011: 237–242).

The '*Estado da Índia*' was also deeply in need of *naus* for the logistical support of its fleets, making use of private *naus* for military missions. Throughout the 1580s and 1590s, sailing vessels of higher tonnage began to be used mainly as support ships instead of warships, which also contributed to the lack of a search for new technical solutions that would make them faster, more seaworthy and weatherly, and equipped with longer-range artillery. On the contrary, they became increasingly larger and heavier, with higher forecastles, which made them particularly slow and hard to manoeuvre.

This typological transformation of the *Armada da Índia* caused profound changes in combat tactics, the Portuguese having ceased to engage in combat with their fleets overseas deployed in line ahead formation and using long-range naval battery. The use of artillery in naval combat, especially higher-calibre weapons, had considerably declined (in 45 of the largest naval clashes between 1535 and 1565, only four were decided by artillery), and the practice of attack-boarding had returned. This tactic of combat, more suitable to the mind-set of the noblemen, was responsible for the degradation of the artillerymen with consequences not only in the level of their effectiveness, but also in their number. This reduction was also due to the lack of artillerymen, gunners and smelters in the Portuguese kingdom and in Europe, thus forcing the employment of eastern combatants, who were technically less gifted. Simultaneously, there was a significant transformation in the artillery of the *Estado da Índia*. Between 1553 and 1581, the arsenals of Goa, which armed a significant part of the Portuguese fleets, saw an extraordinary reduction in their ordnance, from 1,012 cannons to 264. This inevitably had serious repercussions on the military potential of the '*Armada da Índia*', now consisting almost exclusively of small rowing and sailing ships, which were

unable to withstand the attacks from the Dutch and the English fleets in the first decades of the 17th century.

Naval organization in the Atlantic

In the first two decades of the 16th century, the main strategic goal of the Portuguese navy in the Atlantic was defending its commercial routes, especially those to North Africa, the Gulf of Guinea and the Atlantic archipelagos, and the surveillance of its coastline, especially that of Algarve, which was exposed to attacks of Moroccan pirates from Tétouan and Larache. With its area of activity very much centred around the Strait of Gibraltar and on the North African coast, small military fleets were sent there annually to protect Portuguese navigation. Relief fleets were also sent there to provide aid to the strongholds, whenever necessary, as well as great armadas, as happened in 1513, for the conquest of Azemmour (approximately 400 ships). Thus, until 1520, no regular fleets were stationed in the Strait, as was also the case along the Portuguese coast. The armadas annually sent to the Strait were mostly composed of light ships, many of them chartered from national merchants, and some round *caravelas* and lateen-rigged *caravelas* armed with small *bombardas* and *berços*. Given the defensive strategy adopted, it was a very different typology from that of the Portuguese fleets in the East, where sailing ships prevailed at the time.

The increasing Muslim naval power in the Strait of Gibraltar that resulted from the growing Ottoman influence, combined with the increasing French corsair activities, forced King Manuel to restructure the Portuguese navy in 1520. Three *armadas* were created in the Atlantic: the coast guard *armada*, the *armada* of the islands (Azores Islands) and the *armada* of the Strait. With regard to Brazil, several *armadas* were organized throughout the century to guard the Brazilian coast and prevent the French and Spanish from establishing themselves.

The *armada* of the Strait, with a variable number of ships, was formed mainly by *caravelas* permanently stationed in this region, supported by extraordinary fleets organized in the Portuguese kingdom. Due to the growing military pressure of Moroccan and Turkish corsairs and the military-political power of the Sharifs of Sus, King João III, in line with his policy of territorial abandonment in Morocco, begun in 1541, negotiated an agreement with Emperor Carlos V to transfer the responsibility for policing the Strait of Gibraltar to the Spanish fleets. The year 1552, therefore, marked the end of the *armada* of the Strait with the subsequent strategic retreat of the Portuguese

naval forces to Portugal's coast.

The agreement also provided for the restructuring of the coast guard *armada*, consisting of 20 lateen-rigged ships, which were spread over several ports and which sailed all year round in conjunction with a fleet of four *naus* or *galeões*. On the Algarve coast, there was a fleet composed of four rowing boats and one sailing ship, or composed of *caravelas*. The navigation to the African coast, the Gulf of Guinea and Brazil, was also regulated, and it was determined that the ships were to leave in January, March (together with the '*Carreira'* ships) and in September, convoyed and escorted by ships armed by the Crown.

The armada of the islands was made up of three *naus* or *galeões* and seven *caravelas*, a number that varied greatly over the years. Having to depart from the kingdom in April to support the ships of the *Carreira da Índia* on their return, and the Spanish *galeões* with the silver from America, the *armadas* were, therefore, to remain in the Azores until August. On their return, they would include in their convoy not only the *naus* of the '*Carreira da Índia*', but also all the other ships on their way to the kingdom.

The collapse of the Portuguese navy

This entire complex defensive system, the main goal of which was to ensure the circulation of its ships instead of the naval control of these areas, began to show signs of exhaustion in the 1570s, and worsening in the following decades. As in the East, the lack of crews, sailing ships (due to the exhaustion of wood in the Portuguese forests and the high cost of shipbuilding) and weaponry for fitting the fleets was aggravated, and, in regard to artillery, the situation particularly worsened, in 1580, when the warehouses of the Ribeira das Naus were looted by the partisans of António, Prior do Crato.

This shortage of sailing ships had been accentuated not only because Portugal was pushed into the conflict with the Protestant nations of northern Europe, of which the 'Invincible Armada' is a good example, but also, and above all, due to the exponential increase in losses of sailing vessels registered in the *Carreira da Índia* – 37 between 1581 and 1600. From 1592 onwards, as a result of the huge lack of ships for the *Carreira* and the need to have it equipped with warships, its fleets began to include *galeões* which were shifted from the Atlantic fleets. All this, combined with the incapacity of the Portuguese dockyards and foundries to respond to the needs of a continuously growing empire, forced the Portuguese to borrow sailing ships and artillery from the Crown of Castile for their Atlantic fleets (Salgado 2009: 44–58 and

241–242).

The structural weaknesses of the Portuguese navy, seen both in the Indian and the Atlantic Oceans in the late 16th century, were aggravated by their captains' inability to fight with ships in line ahead formation so as to engage their enemies using the technique of long-range naval battery, which had proved to be successful in the East earlier that century (Parker 2000: 125). The naval disaster of the Invincible Armada was a perfect illustration of this inability, and the Iberian leadership, composed of high-ranked noblemen, continued to use the 'half-moon' formation as their method of battle, always seeking to fight by approach-boarding. The English, on the other hand, with a fleet of only 34 warships and aware of the technical superiority of their ships (faster and more seaworthy) and their weaponry, chose to subject the *Armada* to a constant artillery barrage, in the various battles. With a firing rate five times greater than that of the Iberian vessels, the English artillery, although it did not sink a large number of ships, given the heftiness of their hulls, was enough to put them out of combat, which was a decisive contribution to the victory.

The same situation occurred in the Indian Ocean with the arrival of the Dutch, who, equipped with more seaworthy and weatherly ships and with an artillery with greater rates of fire and longer effective ranges than that of the Portuguese, quickly imposed themselves on the fragile Portuguese fleets, as evidenced by the naval blockade of Goa by the Dutch fleet in 1604. In a first attempt, the leaders of the *Estado da Índia* responded to the Dutch offensive by organizing a strong fleet with a large number of sailing ships. However, in 1606, it was defeated off the coast of Malacca as a result of its commanders' decision to fight with their ships at anchor. Henceforth, their strategy was based on the concentration of their sailing vessels in the Indian Ocean and, above all, on the use of their light rowing and sailing fleets which, by sailing near the coast to avoid the Dutch fleets, were extremely useful in the support of navigation and the fortresses of the *Estado da Índia*. As members of the Senate of Goa said, 'it was time to resist, not to attack' (Letter from the Senate of Goa to the King of Portugal, Goa, 1607, in *Archivo Portuguez Oriental*, I, II, 233).

Notes

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2 (Sousa 2009: 128–196; N. G. Monteiro 2009: 199–206).

3 (J. G. Monteiro 2003: 163–287; Duarte 2003: 289–441).

4 The best sources are the chronicles of Fernão Lopes and López de Ayala, and also Jean Froissart, *Chroniques*, S.H.F., ed. Léon Mirot, Tome XII (1356–1388), Livre III, Paris, 1931.

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7
The Spanish Imperial Wars of the 16th Century

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Politics and conflicts

In 1609, Francisco de Quevedo, the great writer of the Spanish golden age, looking back on the previous century, wrote that Spain 'never enjoys peace: it just rests' (*España defendida*, original manuscript, 1609, National Library of Spain, Madrid). A very accurate statement, as throughout the 16th century, the Spanish monarchy found itself in a continual state of war. Some estimates suggest that in the reign of Felipe II there were only six months of total peace, a situation that had enormous repercussions on the society of the time. However, in contrast to what had happened in the Middle Ages, during this period of Spanish history wars ceased to be internal, local or waged on Spanish soil, and the great fields of battle were far from the Spanish frontiers, in Flanders, Italy, Germany and North Africa or America. The new demands of war changed the way it was fought, recruitment systems, weapons and fortifications, configuring a new military model greatly influenced by the so-called 'Military Revolution'.

In 1492, the Catholic Monarchs rounded off the *Reconquista* with the taking of Granada, the last Muslim bastion, in the same year that Columbus discovered America. For many historians, this date marks the beginning of the Modern Era in Spain. Both events opened up the possibility of expansion abroad based on two fronts: towards the Atlantic – consolidating the occupation of the Canary Islands – and after the conquest of America, also towards the Pacific; and towards the Mediterranean and North Africa to continue the religious struggle. The Catholic Monarchs continued with their policy of expansion, intervening in Italy and attacking the French to conquer Naples (1501–1504). The end of this conflict allowed King Fernando the Catholic to accomplish his Mediterranean ambitions, and try to take the main ports in North Africa to protect the Spanish and Italian coasts from attack. The project was supported by the Holy See, which recognized Spain's right to

conquer the kingdom of Tlemcen. Between 1505 and 1510, several expeditions successfully conquered Mazalquivir (Mers el-Kebir), Peñón Vélez de la Gomera, Oran, Bugia and Tripoli. The Spaniards were only defeated on the island of Djerba, which marked the limit of their penetration into the region. Shortly afterwards, King Fernando consolidated the northern frontier of the Peninsula in 1512 by annexing all the territory belonging to the kingdom of Navarre situated south of the Pyrenees. From then on, the Pyrenees would mark the new frontier with France, and the kingdoms of Castile, Aragon, Granada and Navarre would be united.

Carlos I of Spain (1516–1556) received as his maternal inheritance not only a unified Spain, but also the Canary Islands, several cities in North Africa, the kingdoms of Sardinia, Naples and Sicily, and the lands that were being discovered in America. From his paternal grandparents, he inherited the Duchy of Burgundy (1506) and after the death of his grandfather Maximiliano, the title of Archduke of Austria (1519), and was subsequently elected Holy Roman Emperor with the title of Carlos V (1520). This inheritance made him the most powerful monarch in all Europe. His election as Holy Roman Emperor would mark the following Spanish wars, whether to defend Spain from the ambitions of its rivals or to defend the Catholic faith, or even promote its extension to other parts of the world. The first conflict that Carlos had to deal with was the revolt of the *Comuneros* (1520– 1522), which broke out in Castile motivated by complaints about his government – plagued with foreigners – and the enormous increase in taxes necessary to ensure his designation as Holy Roman Emperor. The revolt was a challenge for the government, as many cities on the northern plain rebelled, but it lacked sufficient support and the royal troops were able to quell it in a short time, thanks to the help of the nobles, who defeated the revolutionaries at Villalar (1521). The revolt of the brotherhoods, which took place simultaneously in Valencia and Majorca due to the discontent of the guilds, suffered the same fate. With both victories Carlos ensured internal peace, and the support of the elite, an essential element for the external wars, which were to follow during the rest of the century.

Spain and France were fighting to dominate Italy, at the same time as wanting to become the hegemonic powers in Europe, so in 1521, with the election of Carlos as Holy Roman Emperor, hostilities broke out yet again. The French took advantage of the internal conflicts to help the Navarrese take Pamplona, capturing Fuenterrabía by surprise. The Spanish troops were quickly able to react and defeat the Franco-Navarrese forces at the Battle of Noáin, retaking Navarre. The struggle continued on the frontier until 1524, when the Spaniards recovered Fuenterrabía, but the fight decreased in intensity. There also were border combats on the Flemish frontier, but again

the conflict was decided in Italy. In 1521, the imperial troops expelled the French from Milan, reinstating the Sforza in the Duchy. In the decisive battles of Bicocca (1522), Sesia (1524) and Pavía (1525) the Spaniards overcame the French troops, capturing François I in the last battle.

The release of the French monarch did not put an end to the conflict, as he quickly broke the terms of the Treaty of Madrid (1526), and hostilities began again. The League of Cognac united Pope Clement VII, France, Venice, Florence and the Sforza from Milan – and from 1527 onwards, England – in an attempt to expel Carlos V from Italy in the face of his threatening military power. The imperial troops quickly retook the Duchy of Milan, and the vacillations of the allied group together with the new reinforcements which arrived from Germany, meant that the imperial troops were able to march on Rome. The death of the troop commander, the lack of pay and the presence of a large number of Lutherans among the German *Landknechts*, caused the Sack of Rome (1527), an event which shocked the Christian world and tarnished the Emperor's reputation. The French reacted and unsuccessfully attempted to take Naples (1528) due to the spread of the plague in the French camp. The defection of the Genovese admiral Andrea Doria and his fleet to the imperial cause, helped to totally destroy the French army and the Republican forces in favour of the Spaniards. The renewed effort by the French to reverse the situation by invading Milan was curtailed by the Spanish victory in Landriano (1529). The French military defeat, and the need for Carlos V to defend Vienna from the Turks, accelerated the peace agreement with the Treaty of Cambrai.

The death of the king of Hungary in the Battle of Mohács (1526) made Fernando I of Habsburg their new king. The defeat also meant the appearance of the Turkish threat, which would represent a menacing horizon for European Christianity for the next 200 years. In 1529, the Turks unsuccessfully besieged Vienna, which a contingent of Spanish arquebusiers helped to defend. After the heroic resistance at Güns (1532) it was possible to establish a frontier with the Turks and a fragile truce was agreed. In the Mediterranean, the years of war in Europe had affected the strength of the Spanish defences in North Africa, a circumstance which was taken advantage of by the Barbarossa brothers who in 1534 conquered Tunis, an independent city which had been under Spanish influence. In 1535 Carlos V personally undertook the conquest of Tunis, mobilizing 28,000 soldiers and almost 400 ships of all kinds, a feat which he was able to finance because of the gold brought from America by Pizarro. The success of the expedition was hailed as a triumph but its importance was relative, as in 1536 France, which had become an ally of the Ottomans, attacked the north of Italy, and the border conflict continued until 1538 when both nations signed the Truce of Nice, which allowed Carlos to concentrate on the fight against the Ottomans, given the impossibility of facing two enemies

at the same time, although this would be the main feature of his reign.

The fight against Suleiman the Magnificent was harder and did not produce the expected results, especially on the Adriatic front and on the Hungarian plains. The Christian advance along the Adriatic coast was halted after the naval Battle of Prevenza (1538), in which the Turks defeated the fleet of the Holy League, composed of Spain, the Pope, the Order of Malta and the Republics of Venice and Genoa, under the command of Andrea Doria. A defeat which, added to the disbandment of the League due to different internal divisions, made the Turkish advance by land possible. An Ottoman army besieged the city of Castelnuovo (Montenegro), where an isolated force of 4,000 Spaniards was annihilated after a costly siege. In spite of the numerical superiority of the Ottomans, the steadfast defence of the Spaniards, according to some chronicles, caused 21,000 casualties in the sultan's army, and would forge the characteristic resistance of the Spanish infantry, which refused to surrender in spite of overwhelming odds. This Muslim victory would be followed by others, and the Ottoman dominion spread throughout Hungary. In an attempt to relieve military pressure in the region and imitate what had happened years before in Tunis, Carlos V tried to take Algiers (1541) and thus destroy this dangerous base for the corsairs. The operation was a total disaster due to bad planning and the dates chosen. The troops were surprised by several storms and torrential rain, which complicated the whole operation and caused the loss of many ships and men.

Between 1542 and 1544, hostilities with France broke out again, although the first French successes in Luxembourg and on the Netherlands border were compensated for by the occupation of the Duchy of Guelders, and the advance of the imperial troops towards Paris, which were halted just a few kilometres from the capital. In the north of Italy, the French victory in Ceresole (1544) had few strategic consequences. The Peace of Crépy (1544) did not change the frontiers and would be no more than a break during the long conflict.

The main war front for Carlos V, during the next few years, would be against the Lutheran heresy in Germany, with the Schmalkaldic War (1546–1547), a conflict which would not end the political-religious struggle at the heart of the Empire despite the victory at the Battle of Mühlberg. In 1551, the Ottomans and the French declared war on the Emperor, who was powerless to contain the new Protestant offensive and was forced to sign the Treaty of Passau (1552) in which he renounced many of the advantages he had gained. Concentrating on his struggle against France, the imperial forces besieged Metz at the end of 1552, with an army of 52,000 men. It was a military operation undertaken at a very unsuitable time of year and ended with a retreat.

The war against France and its allies continued after the accession of Felipe

II to the throne. In Italy the troops of the Duke of Alba successfully fought against those of Pope Paul IV Farnese, and the French forces under the command of the Duke of Guise, achieving a peace agreement with the Pope in 1557. This calmed things down in Italy and hostilities were concentrated on the borders with Flanders. In 1557, the decisive victory over the French in Saint Quentin, and the victory at Gravelines the following year, decided the conflict in favour of the Spaniards. The Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis put an end to the fight, which would last longer than the previous treaties, since for the next few decades the French would have to face the religious wars that laid waste to their country.

Peace made it possible for the Spaniards to concentrate on the threat posed by the Muslims throughout the Mediterranean. The Spaniards suffered several important reverses in the north of Africa, such as the unsuccessful expedition of the Count of Alcaudete to Mostaganem in 1558 and the Battle of Djerba in 1560, which caused many casualties and where many prisoners were taken. However, the Spaniards also achieved great successes, as they were able to defend Oran and Malzalquivir (1563), recover Peñon Vélez de la Gomera (1563) and above all actively collaborate in the defence of Malta from the Ottoman attack (1565). The Rebellion of the Alpujarras (1568–1571) meant the appearance of another front in the Peninsula, but was successfully quashed in spite of the fear of the rebelling Moriscos receiving help from the Ottomans. The naval victory at Lepanto (1571) was highly thought of at the time, because of its importance, although it was not decisive. In 1573 Don Juan de Austria, the victor of Lepanto, conquered the city of Tunis, although the Hispanic-Italian forces could not retain it, and the fortress of La Goleta, which would again fall into Ottoman hands the following year after a costly siege. The lasting truce of 1577 would put an end to the high-intensity conflict with the Ottoman Empire, although Turkish expansion would continue in the Mediterranean.

The Portuguese had also been interested in conquering the main coastal cities of North Africa, and had settled in the Strait of Gibraltar. The expedition of King Sebastião of Portugal in 1578 was defeated on the plains of Alcácer Quibir, where the king and a large part of the nobility of the country were killed. This circumstance permitted Felipe II to claim the throne of Portugal. The annexation of Portugal occurred in 1580, when in just a few weeks the Duke of Alba's army managed to advance to Lisbon meeting scant opposition, and crushed the forces of the Prior of Crato in the Battle of Alcantara. The conquest of Portugal would be completed in 1583, when the Marquis of Santa Cruz, in an amphibious operation, was able to disembark and conquer the islands of the Azores, defeating the defending French and Portuguese forces.

FIGURE 7.1 The Ottoman fleet attacking Tunis at La Goleta, 1574. (Braun & Hogenberg, *Civitates Orbis T errarum*, part 2, Cologne, 1575–1612)

The year 1566 saw rebellion in the Netherlands, which would begin the longest conflict endured by the Spanish Habsburgs, the Eighty Years' War (1568–1648). In 1567 Felipe II gave the Duke of Alba command of a military expedition to the Netherlands involving some 9,000 Spanish infantrymen, the body around which the army of Flanders was formed. Alba's first campaigns were very successful, destroying all the enemy's armies. Over the following years, the Spanish forces repeatedly showed their superiority over the Protestants in open battle, decisively defeating them in Jemmingen (1568), Saint-Ghislain (1572), Mook (1574) and Gembloux (1578). However, the existence of a large number of cities which had advanced modern fortifications, and which also took advantage of the voluminous rivers and canals in their region to improve their defences, forced the Spaniards to undertake long sieges in wearing campaigns. The chronic lack of funds to pay the troops and the bankruptcies of the royal treasury contributed to the appearance of the first mutinies among the troops and the sack of Antwerp (1577).

The arrival of Alexander Farnese, as governor of the Netherlands in 1578, coincided with a very positive phase for the Spanish armies. Under his government, the task of reintegrating the rebel provinces under the Catholic monarchy was closer to being achieved than ever before. In very little time he

was able to demonstrate his ability to negotiate, getting part of the Catholic provinces in the south of the Netherlands to return to the protection of Felipe II with the signing of the Union of Arras (1579). During the following years, he undertook to forcibly subjugate the rest of the provinces, which after the Act of Abjuration (1581) passed the point of no return with regard to reconciliation with their sovereign. Between 1579 and 1585 he managed to take most of the rebel bastions situated south of the River Meuse by force, keeping one foot in the north in the provinces of Groningen, Drenthe and Overijssel, thanks to the important work of Francisco Verdugo. During this period, Farnese was able to recover more than 30 important cities, both by force and through negotiation, including Eindhoven, Breda, Tournai, Ghent, Ypres, Brussels, Nijmegen and Dunkirk. These were victories which at no time could be countered by the *Estados Generales* (Parliament) which were never able to carry out a significant campaign to rescue a city or mobilize an offensive to recover lost territory, showing themselves from the very beginning to be on the defensive. The most important victory during this period in history was the capture of the financial heart of the Netherlands, the fall of Antwerp (1585) after a difficult siege which lasted more than a year.

From this moment on the situation in the Netherlands seemed to favour the Spanish forces after almost two decades of continuous advances and deadlocks. The partial reconquest without defined references was at an end, as Farnese imposed more concrete and linear limits on the frontiers, almost completely retaking the rich provinces of Flanders and Brabant, which enormously helped the government of Felipe II to impose its will and be able to claim taxes in large areas of the south Netherlands.

The Spanish successes terrified Elizabeth I of England, who days after the surrender of Antwerp signed the Treaty of Nonsuch (1585) in which she undertook to send an army to Holland under the command of the Earl of Leicester and finance part of the war costs. She was thus attempting to support the rebel cause at its weakest moment, at the same time as ensuring that the Spaniards would have to continue fighting on this front. The war against England was predominantly naval and colonial. The English repeatedly attacked the Spanish coasts (Vigo 1585, Corunna and Lisbon 1589, Cadiz 1587 and 1596 and Las Palmas, in Gran Canaria, 1595), and above all the Spanish empire in America, through the actions of Francis Drake (Nombre de Dios 1572, Panama, El Callao and Lima 1577 and Valparaíso 1578). These were attacks which on repeated occasions enjoyed their expected success, especially in America, and led to the sacking of the aforementioned cities, which gave rise to a new defensive policy on the part of Spain. The Spanish *Armada* in 1588, which was intended to invade England, was a tremendous failure, and the Spanish fleet was defeated, as most of the ships sank as a result of bad

weather, more than as a consequence of the actions of the English ships.

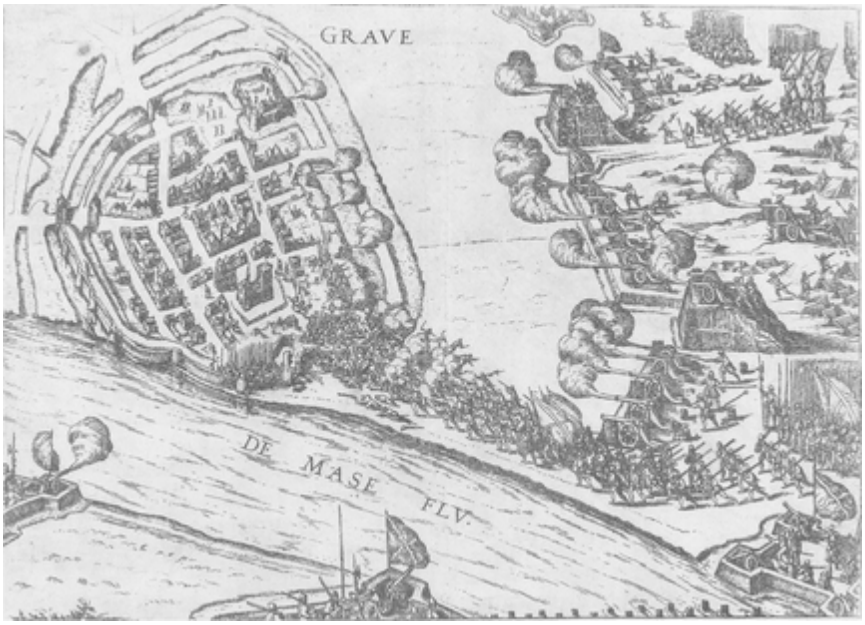

FIGURE 7.2 Siege of Grave 1586, by Frans Hogenberg, 1588. (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam)

The preparations for the invasion of England, and the Spanish participation in the French religious wars, from 1590 onwards, had hindered the operations of the army of Flanders, which enabled the Dutch to recover from the critical situation in which they had found themselves and to rally after their territorial losses. This front would be left on hold, with the Dutch taking the initiative, while the Spanish troops concentrated on the fight in France. In 1595, Henri IV declared war on Spain, and for the next three years, until the Peace of Vervins (1598), the conflict would have a fundamental effect on the frontiers of the Netherlands, the Franche-Comté and Savoy. The Spanish forces initially had several successes at Cambrai (1595), as well as the conquest of Calais (1596) and Amiens (1597), although this last city was retaken by the French.

Spain ended a century plagued with conflict without managing to subdue the revolt in the Netherlands, and at war with England. It is therefore not surprising that one of the political priorities of Felipe III was the *Pax Hispanica*, trying in this way to put an end to the wars and foster the financial recovery of the monarchy.

Changes in the army

The consolidation of a permanent army

Hispanic military supremacy in the 16th century was founded on different factors, both technical – with the rapid implementation of portable firearms – and financial – due to the important role of precious metals mined in America to finance the Spanish armies – as well as essential human aspects. If, from a military viewpoint, Spain appeared on many occasions to be a superior power, it was due to a large extent to the attention it paid to its soldiers, whom it disciplined and maintained after the end of the wars, creating a defensive system in which professionals were the key (Rodríguez Hernández 2013).

The first steps to creating this system were taken at the end of the *Reconquista*, when the army of the Catholic Monarchs continued to develop with the aim of creating a modern model. It left behind its medieval ways and evolved into being totally financed by the royal Treasury. These reforms were intended to better defend the Peninsula. In spite of the victory against the Muslims in Granada, the army was still far from being able to face a western power. The new enemy to beat would be the French monarchy, so one of the first provisions was to increase the number of heavy cavalry. In 1493 the Guards of Castile were created, 2,500 lancers divided into 25 captaincies, the first permanent military unit (Quatrefages 1996).

The reforms of the Catholic Monarchs emphasized internal defence, in the face of the possibility of an external threat or internal rebellion. At the beginning of the 16th century, war became the monopoly of kings, so Spanish society abandoned private wars among the nobles and other small-scale conflicts, and concentrated all its efforts on external wars, confrontations that would ultimately be the most important in the whole century, and which not only put the reputation of the monarchy on the line but also the integrity of the Empire.

The laboratory of the Italian wars at the beginning of the 16th century taught the Spaniards that the traditional models of military mobilization used in the *Reconquista* were not valid for undertaking offensive actions in distant places. These methods could only maintain large contingents of troops for a limited time during the summer military campaign. But professional soldiers were needed to fight in Italy, Africa or Flanders, emphasizing quality over quantity. The conflicts of the first half of the century demonstrated the need to continue with this policy to defend Italy from the ambitions of the French. It was considered vital to maintain several professional infantry corps distributed all over Spanish Italy, which although not very numerous, were essential to structure the defence of these territories, given their preparation. These Spanish garrisons, known as *presidios* (see Glossary), were a reserve of well-

trained soldiers (Ribot 1995; Parker 1991: 69–71).

The Spanish decision to maintain an autochthonous professional infantry contrasts with the policies favoured by the French monarchs, who preferred to maintain their subjects, with the exception of the nobility, distant from the military profession. During the first half of the 16th century, the foot soldiers available to the French monarchy were mostly Swiss or Gascony mercenaries recruited for a specific occasion, in spite of some failed experiments like the so-called *legions* (Potter 2008: 95–123). This reality has been interpreted as the Spanish preference for maintaining autochthonous mercenaries, i.e. the soldiers in the *tercios*. But to see them as simple mercenaries seems to be a rather simplistic interpretation. The Spanish soldiers in the *tercios* were volunteers from any social stratum who wanted to earn their living, acquire honour and a reputation, or move up on the social ladder. These were possibilities that the army offered for a long period of time, so there was no lack of volunteers. But what most motivated enlistment was the fact that the Spanish army had a clear professional structure, in which promotion and remuneration depended on valour and experience, an aspect stipulated in the Military Regulations. These were soldiers who, at the evident desire of the kings, converted the military profession into a way of life. Thus, when they enlisted, they signed an undertaking which tied them to the army until they died or were dismissed.

Structures and chains of command: the tercios

From the beginning of the Modern Era, the infantry had been increasing in number, so that it became essential to organize it into larger structures, larger than companies. From the start of the 16th century, the infantry of the Spanish Austrian monarchy was organized according to two different military models, namely the *tercios* (see Glossary) and the regiments.

The *tercios* were the most characteristic model. These were organic structures, which were both administrative and tactical, and to a lesser extent intended for combat, as the basic unit was the company. The definitive configuration of the *tercio* dates back from the *Ordenanza de Génova* (Instruction of Genoa) of 1536, where the term appears for the first time in an official document. This instruction organized the Spanish forces stationed in Italy into *tercios*, thus standardizing the different troops which made up the military contingents of the Hispanic monarchy, with the infantry acquiring a major role in the army. This instruction set the bases for the new military order and its territorial and administrative division. The permanent

professional character of these contingents, which were not dismissed at the end of each campaign, broke with the medieval tradition, to usher in a new concept of war.

These units were made up only of Spaniards until 1584, when Italians began to be admitted into the *tercios*, followed by the Burgundians in 1598. It was an organizational system that would not spread to other nations, such as the Walloons, Irish or British, until the beginning of the 17th century. The rest of the nations forming the army of the Hispanic monarchy served under the regimental system, in the same manner as in the rest of Europe. This was a model in which the monarch could not exercise total control, as he did not choose the officers who were designated by the owners of the units or those in charge of assembling the contingents. This meant that the *tercios* had a distinctive and different structure. One of the main differences lay in the military ranks, as a *Maestre de Campo* (see Glossary), helped by a sergeant major, commanded the *tercios*. In contrast to what occurred in other armies of the era, the *Maestre de Campo* was chosen by the king, or the different viceroys. The *Maestre de Campo* did not have the ability to name the captains of the other companies or the sergeant majors, who were also designated by the king. This matter was definitive. The *tercios* were not capitalist undertakings under the direct control of their officers, as were the French, Dutch or German regiments; war commerce was based on the fact that the officers financed recruitment.

Another characteristic element was the procedure for designating the officers which was different from that used in other countries. These were professional corps with professional officers. According to the military regulations, to be named captain you had to have 10 years of experience. There were no military academies, as the best school was the army itself. In contrast to other armies where it was usual to choose the new officers from among the nobility or wealthy subjects, the aim in the *tercios* was for promotion to be based on valour and seniority, and not on bloodline or money, which did not avoid some irregularities occurring. In spite of these, it is true that the *tercios* did not have a class structure, such as the French army, in which many regiments were the property of their colonels, in many cases young noblemen who had inherited the unit from their fathers. This did not occur in the Spanish *tercios*, at the summit of which there could be individuals of very humble origin, although it was always easier for the nobles to ascend (Rodríguez Hernández 2011: 114).

From 1536 onwards, the *tercio* was theoretically made up of 10 companies of 300 men. At the end of 1560 Felipe II ordered that the infantry deployed in Lombardy should be thenceforth composed of a *tercio* of 3,000 men divided into 10 companies, with two of them made up exclusively of arquebusiers.

During the 16th century, it was usual for companies to have 300 men, but at the end of the century this theoretical figure had shrunk to 250. The military regulations of 1598 reorganized the *tercios* into not more than 13 or 15 companies (of which two could be of arquebusiers), each one with 260 men, composed of 10 officers and 250 soldiers. Although this was the theory, in practice things were a little different and it seems that the *tercios* could seldom count on 3,000 men. Among the Spanish *tercios* that arrived with the Duke of Alba (1567), only the Neapolitan one was made up of more than 3,000 men in 19 companies, and none of the others reached 2,000, with the average number for all the companies being approximately 180 men, a little more than half the theoretical contingent (Rodríguez Hernández 2015: 42–46).

FIGURE 7.3 Detail of a Spanish drummer, fifer, sergeant and ensign in Flanders, by Frans Hogenberg, 1588. (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam)

Recruitment

The Spanish monarchy, as the first monarchy to be composed of non-adjacent territories, acquired by inheritance or conquest, was the only power in the 16th century that had to tackle a particular defensive problem that the others did not have, and the first to have to create a permanent army that had to act for long periods of time outside its main recruitment area. This circumstance meant that Spain developed a different system from the rest of the European nations. It quickly left aside traditional, or private, recruitment methods, and

concentrated its resources on attracting professionals who were only answerable to the king and the Council of War. These factors meant that the Crown created a complicated direct recruitment technique, at a time when the most common method was indirect, through the action of individuals, whether quartermasters, condottieri or simple mercenaries.

This recruitment system, which was directly centralized and controlled by the states, was the most advanced. It required a developed and modern administration, the possibility of having large sums of money to deal with costs in advance and basically a professional military organization which would take care of the soldiers all year round.

This meant that few governments could use this formula on a large scale, and this model was thus most characteristic of Habsburg Spain (Tallett 1992: 73). During the 16th century, the high level of bureaucratization meant that military recruitment in Spain could be almost exclusively based on a complex administrative system founded on the incorporation of volunteers, which first spread through Castile, and later through Navarre and the Kingdom of Aragon. The process remained almost unchanged from the middle of the reign of Carlos V. The Council of War was responsible for determining the number of soldiers intended to be assembled by each captain and the concrete area where enlistment would take place. The Council of War was also in charge of managing, regulating and paying for the whole process (Thompson 1981: 129–180).

Recruitment in Spain was a royal monopoly, and one could not beat a drum or raise a flag to assemble soldiers without the express consent of the king. This state of affairs may perhaps seem logical and normal, but this was not the case. Troop recruitment in other countries was not so closely controlled as in Spain, which meant that many entrepreneurs made a business of recruiting soldiers, hiring out their services under contract to different states depending on conflicts or needs. Many of these entrepreneurs, among whom there was a large number from the lower nobility, did not always have permission from their monarchs, and until the Peace of Westphalia (1648) many German princes did not strictly control this business within their possessions, so that it was common for small private armies of mercenaries to be established with no state control. In spite of the fact that Carlos V, as Holy Roman Emperor, banned the mercenary contingents of the German *Landknechts* from fighting for the French, he was never successful and at the side of the French troops there were almost as many Germans as among the Spanish forces. This is why it is especially noteworthy that from the 16th century onwards, the Spanish monarch exercised his exclusive right to recruit Spaniards, the most highly valued soldiers, and impose tight administrative control.

Under this administrative system, the recruiting captains concentrated on

the most important and populated municipalities and townships, but recruitment could also extend to areas controlled by the nobles or the different military orders. Throughout the 16th century the districts used for recruitment evolved, becoming more and more fixed, with the recruitment orders being repeated year after year. Although the captains concentrated their activity in the large cities where they could find unemployed men more easily, the search for soldiers also extended to other nearby areas. Until 1580, when volunteers began to become scarce, recruitment did not spread decisively to the kingdom of Aragon, because of the restrictions imposed by the *fueros* (local statutes and charters), especially with regard to housing the troops. From this date on, recruitment spread through these regions, although local captains were preferred. This meant that usually many more companies were recruited in Castile than in the kingdom of Aragon.

Enlistment in Spain was carried out by the captains who were authorized and chosen by the government, who travelled to the places indicated and were in charge of recruiting. The role of the local authorities in this system was minimal. The captains devoted themselves to attracting volunteers and had no authority to force anyone to sign up. They could try to attract the young men in the area by talking about the experiences and opportunities offered by the life of a soldier, or the possibilities for getting rich generated by war or the good conditions when serving in Italy. Everything was licit to deceive anyone who wanted to see the world and leave a routine and servile life. But it seems that most of the soldiers who signed up did so for financial reasons, simply to earn a living or to escape from a strict father, from service or from their future as an apprentice in a workshop. Some were even escaping from justice and had to change their names when enlisting. Others were young men who wanted to travel or people who dreamed of a better life. Some even enlisted to move up the social ladder and the lower nobility with fewer resources were particularly keen to sign up. In the army they could find a worthy way of life and also possibilities to ascend socially and be promoted.

The number of soldiers that the captains had to assemble in their companies evolved greatly over time. In the 1520s some of the companies sent to Italy contained more than 400 men, and the dispatches handed over in 1537 mentioned recruitment of up to 400 men per captain, although it should be borne in mind that in this era few companies were recruited and demographic and urban growth greatly facilitated the task. In the middle decades of the 16th century the average size of the companies decreased to 300 recruits, and throughout the reign of Felipe II the number progressively diminished and it became usual for the captains to be charged with recruiting up to 250 soldiers. From 1580 on, the effects of the demographic crisis became more and more patent, meaning that the companies remained far from complete, and

recruitment suddenly became less efficient. At the end of the century, although attempts were made to assemble between 30 and 40 new companies every year, it was only possible to recruit between 4,000 and 6,000 men depending on the particular situation and the possibility of finding volunteers.

When talking about recruiting volunteers, it is important to mention that the model of the plebeian soldier – or one of lower noble extraction – but professional and active all year round, proved to be effective when there was no lack of wages and rewards. These infantrymen showed their capacity as veterans compared with the hastily assembled armies of the enemies of Spain, composed mainly of nobles on horseback, urban militias or even mercenaries, who were called upon and armed to fight on any specific occasion or exclusively in the summer military campaign. In spite of their numerical inferiority, during the Italian wars or the first campaigns in Flanders, the Spanish troops harvested important military victories, thanks to their professionalism.

The militias

During the *Reconquista* the urban and noble militias formed the greater part of the Christian army. During the Modern Era it continued to be an ancestral obligation to defend the country when necessary in responding to the call of the king, but during the 16th century these calls were increasingly rare and sporadic. They were calls which assembled troops very quickly, but the men were mobilized for only a short time so that they were only effective for national defence and especially for defending the coastal towns against Muslim attacks (Thompson 1981: 151–156).

The idea of creating a National Militia arose several times during the 16th century, as many monarchs saw the potential of the militias when it was a case of defending their territory, as it was an inexpensive army, which needed little training and was basically equipped by the local authorities. The idea was to create a more effective system and change from a local to a regional militia, which was more mobile, better prepared and with stable forces that could also be used as a reserve army in the event of a large-scale military attack. In 1516, Cardinal Cisneros was unsuccessful in trying to create one, but during the reign of Carlos V the idea was forgotten when faced with the imposition of an imperial strategy, which ran counter to the defensive interests and needs of Spain.

The 1552 proposal to create a militia of 34,000 men never materialized, along with the rest of those which arose during the first half of Felipe II's reign. It

would only be as a result of the different English disembarkations and attacks, which culminated with the sacking of Cadiz in 1596, that the Crown seriously considered the formation of this militia made up of volunteers, issuing several general instructions, the most important of which was in 1598, which continued in force after the death of the king.

As compensation for their service, militiamen enjoyed a series of privileges, both honorific (they could bear arms or wear clothes that were banned for the rest of the population) and legal (they were part of the military jurisdiction, they were exempted from lodging troops and their belongings could not be confiscated for debt). Furthermore, when they were mobilized they were paid a wage by the king, with the undertaking that they would never be shipped to serve outside Spain, something that was not always respected. But apart from some coastal areas, very few men enlisted, so its aim was not achieved, and Felipe III had to persevere in the attempt to create a true general militia. The lack of trust shown by the high command towards the militiamen, and their preference for the professionals who were full-time soldiers, did not mean that the militias did not play an important defensive role, both in Spain and in Flanders, Italy or America. In fact, particularly in America, most of the weight of its defence was in the hands of the militias, as faced with the lack of a regular army the Spanish colonists had to take up arms to defend themselves from any outside threat, whether the assaults and acts of piracy were perpetrated by the rest of the western powers, or were attacks from indigenous peoples. In Spanish America, there was also a militia formed by the indigenous people who in the 16th century still fought with their traditional weapons, especially bows and spears.

The Indian host

In scarcely 50 years (1492–1538), the Spaniards consolidated the conquest of an important part of America and put an end to the two most developed and centralized autochthonous empires in the continent, the Aztecs and the Incas. This conquest was carried out in very little time, in spite of the distance and the prior need to explore thousands of kilometres. It was a military success achieved by a few hundred Europeans, against empires with thousands of warriors at their service, a feat which is difficult to understand. Beyond the purely technical explanation – the use of more modern arms and martial techniques –, the spread of diseases – something which actually would occur later on –, or the psychological breakdown of these civilizations faced with the arrival of the Spaniards – white gods who embodied some of their myths –, we

find other much more determinant factors. Firstly, there was the decisive support of the natives, as the Spaniards managed to forge important alliances with the native peoples. Thanks to this they were not only able to defeat the Incas and the Aztecs, but also to retain their conquests. Many of the conquistadors, experienced veterans of the *Reconquista*, proved to be well versed in diplomacy and the military tactics of a frontier society, in which there was always the possibility of forming alliances with people from other cultures and religions. These men used what they had learned in Spain to their benefit, taking away from the indigenous empires their numerical advantage, by making pacts so that other indigenous peoples joined their cause, and using forms of combat suitable for the frontier, like ambushes, surprise attacks and cavalry raids – war tactics often employed on the Nazrid frontier –, avoiding open confrontations in pitched battles as much as possible. These conquistadors carried out a rapid, pitiless and total war which was aimed at the destruction of enemy armies very much greater in number than their own, and the capture of booty. The indigenous soldiers, in contrast, fought according to their cultural norms, trying to take prisoners.

The technological superiority of the Spaniards no doubt influenced the conquest, but it had a much smaller impact than has generally been affirmed. We can find a good example in the expedition of Hernán Cortés (1518), which featured 11 ships carrying little more than 550 officers and soldiers, 14 light cannon, 16 horses and some dogs trained for war. There were only 13 arquebusiers in the expedition, meaning that the contribution of portable firearms was minimal. In fact, the gunpowder had a more psychological than military impact, as this type of weapon was delicate, needed a great deal of maintenance in conditions of humidity and in general there was always a lack of gunpowder, which had to be brought from Europe. In contrast, the crossbow was the projectile weapon most used by the conquistadors during the first half of the 16th century, as it needed much less maintenance. But above all, the weapons that forged the legend of the conquistadors were the sword and the round metal shield. These weapons were skilfully used and were greatly superior to the weapons made by the natives, who had scant possibilities to penetrate the defensive protection of the Spaniards. With time, many conquistadors even abandoned their heavy metal cuirasses – which at the beginning had caused terror in the natives – in favour of lighter armour made of leather, keeping their metal helmets, the morion. The contribution of the horses and war dogs was also important in the conquest, due to the terror they caused among the natives.

The war taken to the American continent by a handful of westerners, with modern weapons and martial ideas, would not have had the same success if they had not been able to count on the support of thousands of natives who

were skilfully convinced to join their cause, as they were enemies of the empires they wanted to control and dominate. The ability to forge alliances with other cultures and mix with the natives would be decisive in the rapid conquest, and in the society they later created. A large number of the conquistadors married the native nobles, and established pacts with the elites, so that in many cases they simply replaced or joined the governing elites, facilitating the control of most of the population, which continued to be oppressed and exploited by the social elite, now also embodied by the Spaniards and the mixed-race civilization they implanted.

The defensive system: *presidios* and armies

During most of the 16th century Spain only needed an army to defend its European territories, the most important military front, as in the Iberian Peninsula and on its frontiers activity was more sporadic. In Italy, due to the wars with France, stable and long-lasting military structures appeared staffed by professional soldiers. However, the most famous army was the Army of Flanders, which arose in 1567 to tackle the rebellion in the Netherlands, and it remained mobilized – in spite of the different moments when there was peace – until 1713, when Spain abandoned the region under the dispositions of the Treaty of Utrecht. This was an army which, during the reign of Felipe II, mobilized an average of 60,000 men, both in the cavalry and in the infantry.

FIGURE 7.4 *Hernán Cortés's meeting with Xicotencatl, 1585.* (Linen of Tlaxcala, Mexico)

As there was no need in Spain, there was no development of a true campaign army with a defined structure, which could fulfil the specific needs of a large army, with a full artillery train, a supply system or a large field

hospital. Thus Spain saw the rise of an amalgam of single and unconnected units with the main objective of territorial defence, which was fundamentally static, but also possessed some mobility as there were a few cavalry corps. The militias also played an important role in the defence of their own territory – in the case of attack or invasion –, as in that period there were no treasury measures for developing and financing general defensive systems that were stable and which embraced the whole territory, concentrating on the defence of specific areas, both coastal and on the frontiers, which possessed advanced fortifications. This meant that in many costal sectors there were no professionals, which limited the static defence to a very small number of key points: Cadiz, Corunna, Pamplona and Perpignan.

The most famous of these defensive units was the cavalry of the Guards of Castile, considered as a reserve army (Martínez Ruiz 2008). However, the basic pillar of peninsular defence was the *presidios,* a group of garrisons – mainly composed of infantry – which were distributed on the frontiers, whether terrestrial or maritime. These permanent garrisons, paid for with the fixed funds taken out of the Castilian treasury (*Millones*, which was a tax levied on basic products), were mainly distributed along the Pyrenean frontier, in the most sensitive places and passes, as well as in the more important coastal zones, both in the Peninsula – including Portugal – and in the Atlantic and Mediterranean islands, and the north of Africa. At the end of the 16th century these garrisons theoretically consisted of between 18,000 and 20,000 men. Among them the 2,000 men who defended the coast of the recently conquered kingdom of Granada and Alhambra are worthy of mention. These troops were paid with the income derived from possessions confiscated from the expelled *Moriscos*, who paid the new colonists.

The soldiers in the *presidios* were professionals who were structured into companies, but did not have any higher organization. In contrast, in the European possessions of the monarchy there were different fixed *tercios*, something which did not occur in Spain. In the Peninsula, these groups were purely defensive and were seldom well trained or ready for combat, except in the most conflictive hotspots, like the north of Africa or the Granada coast. So, in spite of being professional, these troops did not have enough training or manpower. Thus, during the 16th century, faced with the lack of experienced soldiers in the Peninsula, the Crown had to call on the veteran *tercios* it maintained in other places. The *tercios* from Italy were used to quell the Rebellion of the Alpujarras, conquer Portugal and also for the failed undertaking of the Invincible Armada.

The defensive model in Italy was somewhat different from Spain. It was a mixed model, as the static garrisons of the *presidios* were complemented by the existence of fixed *tercios* composed exclusively of Spaniards. These were

units that appeared in 1535, when it was ordered that each of the Italian dominions – Sicily, Naples and Milan – should have a permanent *tercio* of 3,000 Spaniards. With this Spanish infantry presence the monarch tried to control Italy and protect its territories from any enemy attack, whether from the Turks or the French, converting these troops into the key defensive military organization in Italy (Ribot 1995). Static defence continued to be in the hands of the soldiers that manned the castles and fortifications, whether local, professional or Spanish veterans recompensed with serving in a garrison because of their advanced age. In the event of an invasion, these garrisons had the support of a fixed *tercio* of Spaniards – professional and highly qualified – as well as the support of the militias and local defence forces, either belonging to the nobles or the cities.

The military corridor known as the Spanish Road was a route that crossed half of Europe for about 1,000 kilometres, from Genoa to Namur, and which permitted the continual sending of troops to the War in Flanders. Faced with the instability of the seas and the danger posed by the presence of large enemy fleets, the Spanish troops had to move overland from Milan. Thanks to this route, the Spanish veterans from the Italian *presidios* could be transported to Flanders. Above all, the sending of these trained veteran soldiers – who in turn were usually replaced by new recruits from Spain – would to some extent ensure that the quality of these men in Flanders was maintained at an excellent level. The fame, seniority and greater experience of the Spanish soldiers during the 16th century had been previously forged in the passage of the majority through Spanish garrisons in Naples, Sicily or Milan before being sent to Flanders.

The Spanish Road also made sense because the Spanish monarchs always preferred to have few but professional soldiers, and the Spaniards were the most sought after and admired. The theory of military expatriation, as outlined by Professor Parker, influenced the fact that the Spanish monarchs would use all means to try to send Spaniards to Flanders, rather than use locally recruited troops. This idea assumed that a soldier was more effective the farther he was from his place of origin, as being near to home provoked and facilitated desertion. Thus, the Spanish soldiers in the Peninsula were not highly valued. In contrast, the Spanish soldiers of the *tercios* were highly prized outside the Peninsula, due not only to the idea of military expatriation, but also to the greater trust the officers had in them.

Military operations

During the 16th century defence predominated the Art of War, either in open battle or during a siege. Martial conflicts became wearing wars in which the victors were those who had more resources available to them. In a century plagued with wars there were hardly any speedy conquests in Europe. It was normal to have long static conflicts in which it was difficult to know who was winning and where peace was achieved more from exhaustion than because one of the sides had won a decisive victory.

In the wars between the Spanish monarchy, France and the Dutch rebels, the main characteristic was the existence of very stable modern fortifications on the frontiers, which made quick and easy conquests of territory virtually impossible. The political objective of the war was the acquisition or recovery of a province, so that it was necessary to physically occupy the territory as the only means of effectively controlling it. War was concentrated in the large cities defended by their fortifications, meaning that territoriality was the central axis of political-military activity in all its dimensions. It is not surprising that the victor in military terms was the side which had conquered and maintained the largest number of important fortresses at the end of the hostilities, and not the one that had won the most battles.

Battles and actions in the open field

During battles the infantry formed in the centre and the cavalry stayed on the wings. The infantry was divided into three differentiated groups, working together with and supporting the pikemen using firearms. Although effective deployment depended a lot on the terrain, or the task to be carried out, the central element was the squadron formed by the pikemen, surrounded by their garrison of arquebusiers – which protected the pikemen with their fire –, and the detachments formed exclusively by musketeers and arquebusiers, who fought to keep the enemy at a distance. This made it possible to establish a good balance between melée weapons and firearms. Pikemen only fought in the last instance, so the offensive parts were the detachments, which in general were more important in the battles thanks to their mobility and firepower. The squadron was the most defensive and static part. In the centre of the squadron, the best-defended place, were always the flags, but there could also be baggage or other elements. At both sides of the squadron, or on each corner, there could be a detachment of shooters, which in the event of a cavalry attack could take refuge in the middle of the squadron, as due to the limited rate of fire an arquebusier at best could get off a single shot before a cavalry charge was on top of him. This meant that the *tercios* in combat were like castles, thanks to

their detachments (Eguiluz 1595: 44; Barroso 1628: 54).

During the 16th century, all the European nations used practically the same weapons, and combat techniques were usually quickly copied. The great difference in the Spanish case was in the high proportion of firearms that their troops used, and above all in the valour which experience and seniority had given to the soldiers, which could influence the tactics employed.

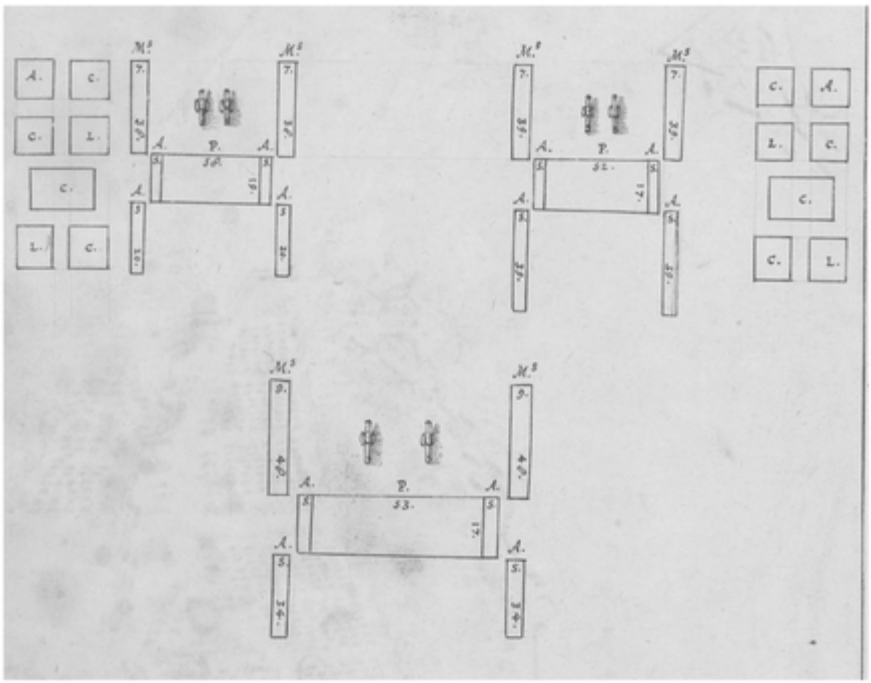

FIGURE 7.5 A tercio in combat, in the manuscript *Arquitectura y máquinas militares* (c.1600). (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid)

Battles were a minimal part of wars, as in the open field the most common occurrence was low-intensity confrontations. During the war with the Schmalkaldic League (1546–1547) the Duke of Alba's forces carried out an irregular strategy, contrasting with the Lutheran's concept of war, which was much more formal. The imperial forces were fewer in number, but among them there were many veterans, an aspect which was taken advantage of by the Spanish command to wage a war based on skirmishes, surprise attacks and lightning operations, on the part of the light cavalry and the arquebusiers on horseback and on foot. This type of small-scale and irregular local warfare was also practised in the wars in Flanders, which was based on hand fighting, skirmishes or cavalry attacks aimed at cutting the enemy's supplies, as the veteran soldiers were the most skilled in these small-scale confrontations. The Spaniards even developed a type of nocturnal incursion called an *encamisada*:

a surprise attack in which the soldiers wore white shirts (*camisa*) over the rest of their clothes to be able to recognize each other in the dark.

This type of small-scale fighting was what the Spaniards preferred, as they could take advantage of their firearms. The arquebusiers were multipurpose soldiers, who were very valuable in this type of combat. They were essential in these hand fights and assaults, due to their considerable mobility, as their defensive armour had been lightened until it was reduced to a morion that covered their heads. The arquebusier became the model for the soldier in a 16th century *tercios*, and some theorists say that everyone wanted to serve in these posts, as they were more mobile because they carried a lighter load, and had more opportunities to participate and get rich from hand fights and sackings. The wars of the 16th century were undoubtedly marked by the successes of the Spanish arquebusiers, as Spain was the first nation to introduce massive use of firearms on the battlefield. It is not surprising that the following sentence is attributed to Charles V: 'The outcome of my battles has been decided by the fuses of my Spanish arquebusiers.'

Fortifications and siege warfare

Since the Middle Ages, the taking of castles had been the most important phase of wars, more than battles, as the construction and maintenance of small garrisons was the cheapest and most effective option for controlling the territory. At the beginning of the modern era this tactical and strategic concept would change due to the remarkable advance in artillery, as it could easily destroy the old vertical walls containing cylindrical towers. Siege-trains appeared in the armies, consisting of a series of cannons and their equipment with their main mission of conquering any castle. The response of the architects to such artillery was not long in coming, and at the end of the 15th century it was already apparent that walls in the form of a star could resist despite heavy bombardment. Few nations took notice, such as Italy, where several decades later, fortifications of this type began to be built, thus their name *trace italienne*. The generalization of this technique was slow to evolve, due to the costs, but its effectiveness contributed to its spread all over the world, even in America and Asia.

FIGURE 7.6 Cartagena de Indias Plain (1594), by Bautista Antonelli. (Archivo General de Indias, Seville)

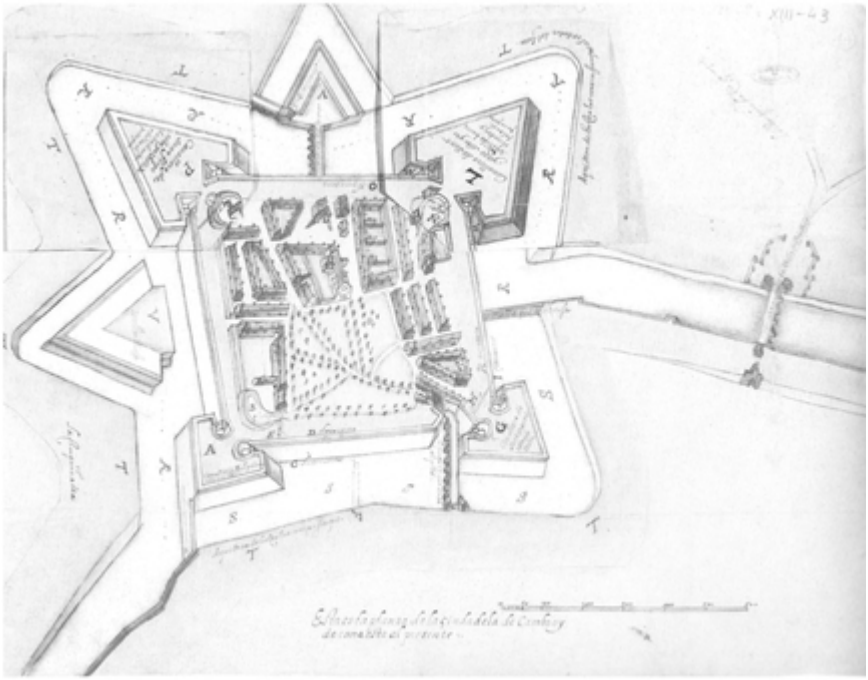

FIGURE 7.7 Citadel of Cambrai, c.1609. (Archivo General de Simancas, Valladolid)

This technique was based on the creation of walls which were increasingly lower and thicker. In this way the fortresses were more protected against

artillery fire, but also more vulnerable to surprise attacks, so that they had to dig wide moats to hinder the approach of the enemy. They also built bastions that jutted out from the wall, artillery platforms which maintained the enemy cannons far away and permitted crossfire over those attacking the walls. Other elements could be added to this complicated system with a polygonal plan, such as ravelins, hornworks, half moons or exterior star-shaped redoubts, which made it much more difficult to launch a frontal attack.

During the whole century, frontier cities in particular spent immense sums adapting and modernizing their city walls. In a first stage, they gradually introduced bastions with artillery into the medieval walls to reinforce the perimeter. Then they began to improve the old linear curtain walls, which were reinforced with ravelins and exterior works designed to protect the walls, to such an extent that they were often out of sight of the attacker and their artillery. With time, the systems became more and more complex, increasing the defensive perimeters with the installation of numerous exterior forts so that the enemy had to invest more time and energy to complete any conquest. Battles were scarce and irrelevant in the areas where these new fortifications were built, and many were fought between the besieging army and a relief column.

The conquest of the fortified cities using these techniques became rather complicated and took time. Traditionally, it consisted of destroying part of the curtain wall with cannon fire or with a mine, followed by a mass infantry assault. However, thanks to the new architectural systems, the bastions kept the besieging cannons at bay, so that their shots took longer to break down the brick walls, as they did not break so easily as the old stone walls. Furthermore, as they were thicker walls and had a bigger moat, it was more costly to dig a subterranean mine to destroy the walls.

The cities defended with this system of fortifications were more and more numerous and difficult to take. From the last third of the 16th century onwards, most of the fortified cities could only be conquered through hunger, by creating a total blockade. The besiegers had to dig trenches and fortification works to complete a defensive precinct which covered an extended perimeter, to isolate the besieged from the outside world and offer protection to the besieging forces from the relief armies. These constructions were mainly made of earth, which was used as a parapet and also as a platform to mount the siege batteries protected by trenches and redoubts. In turn, thousands of men had to be used to guard all these constructions due to their enormous extension, which meant that sieges were very costly, especially if they lasted for several months. A siege was a true test of strength, as the besiegers could lose many more soldiers than their enemy due to the appearance of diseases or any other problems. Immense armies could be practically eliminated while besieging a

city with hardly any combats, suffering even more casualties than if they had lost a battle.

FIGURE 7.8 *The Siege of Maastricht* (1579) by an anonymous painter. (Collection: Royal Palace of Aranjuez, Spain)

The siege of Haarlem is a good example of wars and sieges in the first phases of the Eighty Years' War. This was not a very normal campaign compared with the rest of the war, as it occurred in the middle of winter and was characterized by extreme violence practised by both sides. The city, since it was virtually surrounded by water, was able to resist for seven months through a bloody siege (December 1572 to July 1573), partly because the rebels on several occasions were able to obtain supplies by water or across the ice using sledges. The sufferings of the besiegers were extreme, as they had no available safe supply routes and were surrounded, from their point of view, in a totally hostile environment. Moreover, the soldiers did not receive their pay, which explains their aggressiveness and on many occasions temerity. In spite of the use of artillery, the Spanish assault attempts did not bring the success they expected. In the operation, the Army of Flanders lost 4,000 of the 13,000 men who had been mobilized, mostly due to the bad lodging conditions and the rigours of winter.

Artillery had been the engine of the change in fortification systems, but during the 16th century architecture was quicker in its innovations. Artillery continued to play a limited role in pitch battles, due to its enormous weight

and lack of mobility, rate of fire and reliability, which meant that it was not always an effective and practical weapon. In the sieges, in contrast, it proved to be essential, as it was always shooting at fixed targets; but again, its limited mobility restricted its use and its numerical growth. In the transition towards the 17th century, siege artillery was multiplied by five at the same time as its efficiency was increased, and was the key to a fortress yielding. If in the decades from 1560 to 1580 it was usual for siege trains to be composed of fewer than 20 siege engines, 60 years later the number of artillery pieces were at times even greater than a hundred and, above all, they were more efficient and had a more suitable, functional and unified calibre.

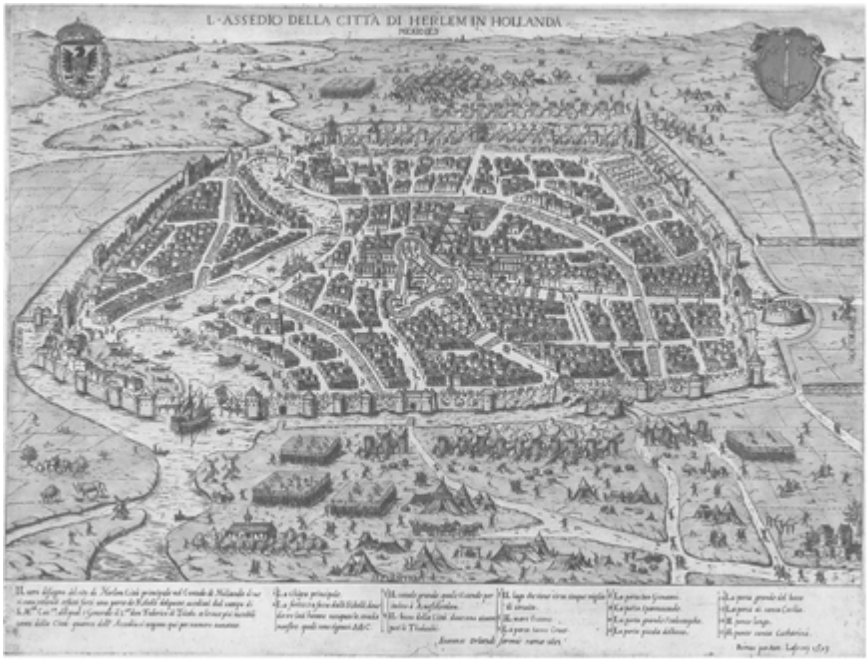

FIGURE 7.9 *Siege of Haarlem (1572–73),* by Antonio Lafreri 1573. (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam)

Armament

The pikemen

In the middle ages the infantry played a secondary role in the war, both because of the medieval idiosyncrasy – which had always placed more importance on the actions of the knights – and because of the revolution

generated in Europe with the introduction of the stirrup. The lessons of the Swiss when they defeated the Burgundian knights were not forgotten, and during the final decades of the 15th century European armies began introducing the use of the pike in compact formation. It was a weapon that made it possible to increase the number of men in the armies, due to its small cost and the ease with which they could learn to use it. Squares of pikemen won battles against infantry and cavalry by taking up the tactics used by the Macedonian phalanxes. Their mass was their strength and the squadrons of pikemen were only vulnerable to projectiles. The Spanish military model imported new groups, seeing that the Swiss fought with the pikes in compact and linear formations. The German *Landknechts* established squadrons, developing their tactics, while the Spaniards took the system a step further by introducing and integrating firearms into the whole, something that was very soon imitated by the other nations.

In the 16th century, the pike was considered to be the queen of arms by authors such as Londoño, Scarión and Barroso. In fact, this was true for some time and the pike did not lose its reputation and importance until well into the 17th century, as it was essential to be able to contain a cavalry charge. In spite of its great length, as it must have measured some 5 to 5.4 metres, it was a relatively versatile weapon. It was especially useful in defensive actions against the infantry, and specifically against the cavalry. Pikes were also easy to produce and were a very cheap weapon with which to equip the infantry en masse. A pike's price, together with the small amount of training needed for a soldier to be able to handle it, made it the most common weapon for European soldiers in the first half of the 16th century, until portable firearms were developed and perfected.

In combat, pikemen fought in very close lines, forming a square with their weapons pointing out like a gigantic hedgehog. While they maintained their position and their cohesion, few riders dared to charge at them. In the middle of the 16th century, pikemen served in two large groups, always fighting in close order, where their formation gave them the advantage. In the first rows were the armoured pikemen – the elite – as they were equipped with basic defensive armour, called *coseletes* (see Glossary), after the armour they wore. These were the most well paid – as they received one monthly *escudo* (see Glossary) more than their lesser armoured companions – as well as being generally rewarded with a large share of the economic advantages which each captain could bestow on his best soldiers. The other group was formed by the light pikemen, who had no other defensive armour than a helmet and were called *picas secas* – dry pikes (see Glossary). They were the worst paid soldiers in the companies. In contrast with the musketeers, arquebusiers and *coseletes*, they were the only ones who did not receive extra pay. The dry pike-men were

usually novices, in fact the new soldiers automatically served in these positions until they bought the necessary equipment to be able to serve in other positions (Tore 2006: 256).

The pike was considered the most noble of all weapons, generally chosen by the aristocrats who fought on foot. The ideal pikemen were the *coseletes*, undoubtedly the soldiers who visually most resembled the medieval ideal of a knight or man-at-arms protected by metal armour. In fact, during the 16th century, it was the custom for the Spanish nobles to fight on foot among the infantry in contrast to those of other countries who continued to prefer to fight on horseback. Moreover, the re-assigned officers of the companies, who no longer held an executive post – but who continued to serve as soldiers in exchange for extra pay – had to serve with a pike and a *coselete*. Even more important, most of the advantages (extra pay) that were at the disposal of the company captains were distributed among the men armed with the *coselete*, so that it was logical that to take up the pike continued to appear to be the most honourable post (Quatrefages 1983: 423). This ideological attitude towards the predominance of the pike – as the queen of weapons – shown by some writers at the end of the 16th century seems to be rather conservative. Other contemporaries like Eguiluz asserted the contrary, and even thought that in a company of 100 men, 35 pikemen were sufficient (Eguiluz 1595: 59).

Throughout the modern era, defensive protections were gradually lightened and reduced with the spread of portable firearms. Thus, the old complete suits of armour were maintained for some cavalry units, but in general they evolved to retain only the essential elements, namely a cuirass that covered the torso. In theory, the *coseletes* also had to wear a morion to protect their heads and their whole *coselete* which, together with their breastplate and back plate, had to include protection for thighs, shoulders, arms and hands. According to documentation of the era, a simple *coselete* weighed about 22–23 kilogrammes, which made it difficult to use the pike, hence it is not surprising that during the 17th century part of the accessories were eliminated.

Firearms

At the end of the 15th century, the infantry in some Italian states – like Milan – began to put aside most of their crossbows in favour of firearms. These were easy weapons to use and produce, being simple and cheap artefacts, especially their ammunition. But despite the fact that firearms had achieved a role in European armies, there were few companies of shooters, and it was preferred to use them in the defence of fortifications, an aspect especially appreciated in

the armies of the Italian states. There, the main weapon was still the cavalry, and only a few of the infantrymen used firearms or crossbows. Even as late as 1520, Machiavelli still considered firearms of scant importance – although he did encourage the infantry to use the pike – so in the ideal armies he wrote about there was a minimal presence of arquebuses.

Until the arrival of the Great Captain – especially after his second expedition to Naples (1501–1504) – no nation had really invested in using portable firearms on a large scale in pitched battles, and even less so in integrating all the available weapons within the same companies. In fact, in the expeditionary army there was one soldier armed with an *espingarda* (see Glossary) for every four infantrymen (Quatrefages 1996: 127–129). Until that time the companies had been specialized and usually organized by weapon. The Great Captain introduced different types of weapons in the same companies – melée weapons and firearms – which helped them to connect and support each other, permitting greater efficiency, and making the companies more multifaceted and independent at the tactical level.

Thanks to the Great Captain, and his victory over the French at the Battle of Cerognola (1503), portable firearms had shown to be enormously useful, and their early use in the infantry formations helped the Spaniards to dominate in the Italian wars. In fact, the word Bicocca, the definition of which is bargain in Spanish, comes from a battle of the same name, which was fought in Italy against the French in 1522, where the Spaniards won an overwhelming victory with very few casualties. In the Battle of Pavia (1525), the large number of firearms used by the Spaniards – and the greater skill of their shooters – determined the victory. At that time the Spanish infantry companies had more than a third of their men armed with firearms. Moreover, these men were the cream of the companies and were paid more money in compensation for their specialization, their munitions and their gunpowder expenses. The German *Landknechts* and the French infantry also introduced firearms deployed next to their formations of pikemen, but in much smaller numbers.

The first portable firearms began to appear in the Spanish army in the Granada War, in which there were a few companies of soldiers armed with *espingardas*. But these devices were simple, little more than a stick with an iron barrel. The real revolution arose at the beginning of the 16th century with the appearance of the arquebus and its rapid spread. It was a much more sophisticated weapon which incorporated a matchlock to ignite the gunpowder, so that it was more manageable and easier to aim. Its origin and its name are uncertain, and there are different theories, some of which relate it to Italy or the Arab world, but the most plausible one is that its origin was German, as the name derives from the word *hanckenbüsche* which literally means a firearm on a hook.

The arquebus was rather inaccurate and at the beginning had a small effective range, but in its favour, it had considerable destructive power – as it could perforate armour at 50 paces – and required little skill to handle. According to some theorists 60 days were sufficient to train a soldier, a much shorter investment in time than training a man-at-arms or an archer. The effective fire of an arquebus during the 16th century was at around 75 metres, especially if it was fired at compact infantry formations. In contrast, the bigger brother of the arquebus, the musket, had a greater penetration capacity, and a greater range, as it used shot of at least 1.5 ounces (42.5 grammes), which at 180 metres could even penetrate a good quality *coselete*, and fell a horse at a distance of 500 metres, something which also depended on the accuracy of the shooter. However, combats were usually carried out at a shorter distance to improve effectiveness (Rodríguez Hernández 2015: 125).

The musket was a heavier and more powerful version of its little brother, the arquebus. The difference between them was in their size (calibre, length and weight), performance in combat (range, power and rate of fire) and their handling, as its weight – between 8 and 9 kilogrammes – made it difficult to transport and use. The calibre of a musket shot was usually at least one ounce and a half or two ounces – although we know that there were pieces of up to two and a half ounces, which logically were too large or too heavy – while the arquebus fired bullets of at least three-quarters of an ounce. Although we do not know the details of its origin, it is thought that the musket could have arisen at the beginning of the 16th century, having been invented in Italy or Spain. It actually appeared as a piece of light artillery suitable for defending fortifications, and was used first by the Spaniards in the north of Africa. In fact, there had always been a heavier version of the musket that could only be used supported on a wall, known as a *mosquete de muralla* (wall musket), which was too heavy to be used in an open area. The Spaniards would again be the first to introduce this type of firearm in their infantry formations. By order of the Duke of Alba, on his journey to Flanders along the Spanish Road (1567), 15 muskets were given to each Spanish infantry company. From that moment on, the musketeers became the elite of the infantry companies, as they were paid three *escudos* extra in compensation for their hard work, as they needed to be strong and robust men. They were the best paid soldiers – earning double that of a plain or non-specialized soldier – although their equipment was more expensive. With regard to costs, the complete kit of an arquebusier, with all the essential accessories, cost 30 *reales* (see Glossary) in the Royal factories, while that of the musketeer cost 50, although prices varied a great deal.

Pikes and firearms were destined to work together in the 16th and 17th centuries, since until the introduction – and generalization – of the bayonet, the infantry did not have an effective weapon to reject a cavalry attack. During

the reign of Felipe II the proportion of pikes to firearms would change in favour of firearms, and by 1594 it was stipulated that the new companies recruited in Castile for Italy were required to have 125 pikemen, 100 arquebusiers and 25 musketeers. The instructions of 1598 would return to the topic, determining that a company of 250 soldiers had to have 130 pikemen, 100 arquebusiers and 20 musketeers, while the instructions of 1603 established that half the company – fixed at 100 men for the *tercios* serving outside the Peninsula – would be made up of pikemen, and the other half of shooters, with at least 10 per cent musketeers, so that from then on half the men carried firearms.

This theory was not always followed, something we can observe thanks to the troop formations. In fact, it seems that the units serving in Sicily soon had a high proportion of firepower, since in the formations of 1572 and 1574, between 70 and 80 per cent of the infantry had arquebuses and muskets (Belloso 2010: 123 and 133). In other cases the ratio between firearms and pikes was smaller, especially in relation to newly recruited soldiers who were embarking from Spain, such as the 3,719 men transported in 1594 in galleys to Italy (of whom 53 per cent had a firearm).

The cavalry

During the 16th century, the cavalry went from being the main element in the armies of the Middle Ages to being a secondary weapon, used only as support to the infantry. The complicated orography of the Iberian Peninsula meant that the heavy cavalry composed of nobles or men-at-arms could not play such a significant role as in the rest of Europe, which was especially evident in the final stage of the *Reconquista* due to the abrupt relief of the Nasrid frontier. In the Spanish armies at the end of the 15th century, there was a predominance of light horsemen, armed in the Arab style – with an *adarga*, sword and lances – riding with saddles with short stirrups – so that they rode with their legs bent but in a vertical position from the knees up –, which allowed them to get greater impetus from the legs and achieve greater mobility. Tactically they did exploration work, and in combat they were outstanding at flanking and harassing, dividing and pursuing the enemy, taking advantage of the abrupt nature of the terrain.

Most of the cavalry that the Great Captain took on his expedition to Naples was of this type, and after the defeat at Seminara (1495), it became evident that the French men-at-arms were superior in open battle against the Spanish and Italian cavalry, as they were much heavier. In the Italian wars, the Spaniards

could never count on a large cavalry force, as only 10 to 15 per cent of its soldiers were horsemen. From that moment on, tactically, the cavalry would be relegated to secondary missions and exploration, never being the main element of the battle, as it often stayed in the reserve, with the infantry bearing the brunt of the combat. Its missions in a pitched battle were defined as maximizing possible victory – with the subsequent pursuit of the enemy – or minimizing defeat with a charge to give the rest of the army time to flee or reorganize. During the 16th century, the cavalry flanked the main line of the Spanish armies, but in many battles its use was not decisive, such as in Bicocca or Pavia, mostly because it was relatively small.

The Military Revolution permitted armies to increase their size, but the cavalry actually reduced its importance and numbers. In Flanders, where the terrain was plagued with canals and full of fortifications, the cavalry was of little use. Siege war had no place for the cavalry, which was also expensive to maintain, motivating its reduction in size. The cavalry evolved towards different tactics, developing the light cavalry, with the function of exploring and reconnaissance, protection of convoys, pursuing the enemy and carrying out actions which required speed. This was a tactical role in which the light cavalry was much more useful and practical, as well as cheaper and easier to maintain. These types of tactics had been practised in the *Reconquista* and the Italian wars, but were also employed in Flanders. The cavalry reduced its numbers, and in the first years of the wars in Flanders – especially from 1575 onwards – the proportion between cavalry and infantry could easily reach one horse for every 20 infantrymen (Parker 1991: 328–329).

During the first half of the 17th century the cavalry continued to be characterized by practising shock tactics, and carrying lances to maximize their charges. Although in the Italian wars the Spaniards maintained some companies of men-at-arms, most of the cavalry – of Italian or Hispanic origin – was light. The teachings of Pavia had demonstrated the capacity of the arquebusiers to tackle the heavy cavalry, provided that the terrain was favourable or they were sheltered, which in some way is why the Spanish commanders underestimated the capacity of the cavalry. In contrast, the French still maintained large numbers of heavy and light cavalry during the Italian wars. These were troops that in the Battle of Ceresole (1544) would give them the advantage over the Spanish forces which they defeated inflicting numerous casualties. During the battle, the French gendarmerie unsuccessfully tried three times to charge at the Hispano-German infantry commanded by Cardona – who had previously eliminated the Gascon and Italian infantry which opposed him – without achieving their objectives, and suffering numerous casualties. However, in the course of the battle the numerical superiority of the French cavalry, and its capacity to eliminate the Hispanic-

Italian cavalry, contributed to the French victory, providing evidence that the cavalry was still necessary on the battlefield.

The Spaniards, thanks to their experience with the Ottomans and North Africans, were reluctant to completely abandon the lance – and the tactics of the light cavalry – as they were well aware of the capacity of the Hungarian, Croat and Albanian cavalry when facing the Turks, which was well reflected in the writings about light cavalry. The Duke of Alba went to Flanders (1567) with a limited contingent of cavalry composed of 1,200 horsemen in 12 companies of light horses, 5 with Spaniards, 3 with Italians, 2 with Albanians and 2 with arquebusiers on Spanish horses. Most of these units continued to fight with lances, but there were also firearms among them (Mendoza 1592: 29).

The invention of ignition systems where it was not necessary to have a lighted fuse meant that the cavalry could also be equipped with firearms. This innovation caused part of the cavalry to abandon the lance and shock tactics – ineffective when faced with well-organized infantry armed with pikes, and create the so-called *Herreruelos* – armoured pistoliers (see Glossary), or cuirassiers (*caballos-corazas*), riders who were armed with portable short firearms, like pistols, and who continued to wear defensive metal protection. The versatility offered to the cavalry to have weapons that inflicted damage at a distance, would mean that this innovation was maintained and generalized, and at the end of the 16th century almost all the cavalry in Western Europe had abandoned the lance in favour of firearms. However, their tactics were very conservative, as they could not attack well-organized squadrons of infantrymen for fear of their arquebuses and pikes. The cavalry used to fight using the formation of a caracole, which consisted of the cavalry firing their pistols on the enemy formations in waves, subsequently going back to the rear of the formation, recharging and firing again. They only rarely charged with swords or other weapons. Their main weapons were firearms, and in contrast to those of the infantry they were smaller and had a shorter range.

The navy

The dominions of the Spanish Empire should have been connected by sea, but its particular geographic situation, between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, conditioned the form of combat and the type of ships that were suitable. The galleon was the prototypical warship used by the Spaniards in the Atlantic. The galley, in contrast, was the Mediterranean model par excellence,

the warship most used by the rivals of Spain, particularly the Ottoman Empire.

The monarchy, especially in the time of Carlos V, failed to provide a stable war navy with well-defined tasks. It is not that Spain was unaware of the importance of the seas for communicating with, and consolidating, its dominions, but until the 1570s – especially in the Atlantic – it did not need numerous forces to protect trade with America, as its main enemy was France, which possessed less naval power. Naval activities were sporadic, so the sea battles – especially in the Atlantic – were often between subjects and not war navies, with the corsairs being the protagonists. This meant that during the 16th century the Spanish monarchs were far from enjoying a monopoly in the war at sea.

Since the first wars with France, an attempt had been made to mobilize small fleets to protect trade with America, or the route which joined Biscay with Flanders, but these were squadrons that were organized locally or were in the hands of entrepreneurs, and were demobilized at the end of the conflicts. Small squadrons were formed as a result of a contract between the king and a private individual, who was at the same time the ship-owner and the military commander of the ships. At that time, there was still no ship specialization, so that the vessels used were more suitable for trade than for war. Furthermore, when a naval expedition was organized, the usual recourse was to use merchant ships, which were requisitioned or hired and rapidly adapted for war.

From the 1570s onwards, it became evident that in the Eighty Years' War the Spaniards were losing the sea war against the Dutch, so that it was necessary to create an Atlantic war navy to protect trade and the Spanish coasts. The Anglo-Spanish war (1568–1604) contributed even more to this idea due to its clear maritime dimension. Above all, during the last two decades of the century, Felipe II tried to create a strong Royal Navy both in terms of the number of ships and their quality, encouraging the state administration to build, crew and arm these vessels making them more suitable for combat. The losses of the Invincible Armada (1588) led to a much more suitable naval construction policy, and the following year saw the planning of the construction of the 12 apostles, 12 galleons of 1,000 tons to reinforce the Royal Fleet. Between 1588 and 1598, approximately 60 ships were built, changing the traditional model of navies. In the expedition to the Azores (1583), only three of the 35 large vessels that participated in the operation were the property of the king. A decade later the fruits of this new policy would be evident, and in 1597 a quarter of the fleet (20 ships) belonged to the king.

Galleys predominated in the Mediterranean. The squadron of Spanish galleys was definitively formed in 1530, as a result of the contract signed with Alvaro de Bazán, in which he undertook to arm and maintain 10 galleys in exchange for certain subsidies and privileges. The Spanish galleys formed the

first permanent squadron, as well as the core of the increasingly complex Hispanic naval organization in the Mediterranean. Its mission was to defend and patrol the peninsular coasts, and its number grew over time. In 1535, the squadron had 17 ships. From the 1560s on, during the naval conflicts with the Ottoman Empire, Felipe II began a policy of naval expansion, which raised the number of galleys in Spain to 46 units in 1574. From this moment onwards, there was a slow decline, and there were only 21 galleys left in 1598. But the squadron of Spanish galleys was only one of several that Felipe II had at his disposal, as in 1574 – a little after Lepanto – he possessed 146 galleys distributed in different squadrons. Some of these were the property of the king and were paid for by local funds, as they had to patrol the coasts of the kingdoms they represented, such as the squadron of galleys belonging to Sicily or Naples. Others, in contrast, were private squadrons, outstanding among them being the squadron of Genoa (Thompson 1981: 201–253).

FIGURE 7.10 *The Battle of Lepanto*, 1571. (National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London)

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Conclusions

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In the early 1990s, apart from a few notable exceptions, the history of war in Spain and Portugal during the Middle Ages was still anchored in ancient 19th-century topics, which had already been superseded by European historiographies. In addition, it was studied almost exclusively by military officers, was virtually excluded from academic and professional historical research and, in some intellectual and university circles, it was even identified with the stigma of militarism characteristic of the authoritarian political regimes that governed these two countries for decades.

Fortunately, following the trail of some genuinely pioneering authors and benefiting from the influence of the models of analysis and interpretation created in other countries, from the aforementioned decade onwards, research into these issues not only became standardized in Portuguese and Spanish academic areas, but also experienced a very remarkable flowering that completely changed the Iberian historiographic panorama, integrating this topic into the most advanced areas of study taking place at the international level.

Research carried out during the last three decades has allowed us to revisit old topics with renewed methodologies and to open new paths that cover the most important aspects of medieval warfare, namely the composition of armies, the ways of making war, military equipment, fortifications, the navy, logistics, the financing of armies, and the propaganda and ideology created by powers to justify or mobilize society, among other substantial issues.

Thanks to all this, it has been possible in this volume to present, in an abridged form, a wide range of evidence relating to the military realities of all the Iberian kingdoms during the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age, thus offering a uniquely comprehensive overview of war in the Iberian Peninsula during nine centuries that were crucial in the political and territorial formation of the south-west of Europe and whose echoes would in time reach the rest of the world.

The evidence presented in this book shows that war was a central activity in the life of medieval Iberian societies. Armed violence, carried out not only by states but also by other institutions and by individuals, was an omnipresent and everyday phenomenon: war between neighbouring kingdoms caused by a

variety of reasons, civil wars of a dynastic nature, military confrontations between monarchies and the nobility of each kingdom, struggles between different noble clans. The typology of the wars was varied and, certainly, comparable to those that we can find in other medieval geopolitical areas, but in the Iberian case we must add a long-running, recurrent conflict that had a definite impact on the history of those societies, namely the war between the Christian kingdoms and the Islamic al-Andalus.

Directly or indirectly, military activity as frequent as it was decisive for the destiny of institutions, communities and people, ended up mobilizing and putting to use many of the available human, economic, technological, institutional and intellectual resources. However, the resulting military model was not the same for all those involved. In the Christian kingdoms, there was a strong militarization of society, in line with patterns of behaviour common to the rest of Western Europe. Regarding a common place in historiography, it can be said that these were 'societies organized by and for war', in which dedication to arms became a criterion of differentiation and social hierarchy, with the most appreciated social values deriving from bellicose action, as leaders were appreciated in terms of their achievements, and their military values and religious convictions were saturated with warmongering. It is quite possible that, as a consequence of the military context mentioned above, the degree of militarization of Iberian societies was even more pronounced than that of their European neighbours. Here it affected not only the monarchy and the groups of nobility but also the whole community. This is demonstrated by the generalized extension of military obligations, which were never limited to a single social group, the militarization of the institutional and social structure of urban societies and the intensity of armed confrontation interpreted in terms of reconquering, and the Crusades, which legitimized war and offered a singular identity to the social group along with a coherent and motivating ideological discourse.

These belligerent features were not so obvious in Muslim societies. Everything suggests that in the Islamic military model, at least that established in al-Andalus and in the Maghreb, the degree of involvement of the community in war was never so pronounced, the predominant social values were not so closely linked to armed activity and even jihadist religiosity does not appear to have had widespread social impact. It was the state, not society, that was militarized, and assumed military functions, doing so by excluding the other social agents and thereby monopolizing armed activity.

The confrontation of these two models of military organization showed that, in the long term, the militarized societies of the north were able to sustain an ongoing war effort even when their central powers were not in a position to do so, whereas militarized Islamic states depended very closely on the situation of

the central power at any particular moment so that, in situations where this politically collapsed, they were practically defenceless.

The historical result of this duality of models is well known: the border between the Christian kingdoms of the peninsular north and al-Andalus gradually receded south from the middle of the 8th century until the late 15th century, when the kingdom of Granada, the last Andalusian Islamic state, disappeared. However, simultaneously, the Christian political nuclei that had emerged after the Islamic conquest were consolidating their institutions, delimiting their respective borders, and politically and spatially acting in conformity. These phenomena were not exempt from competition between the kingdoms, resulting in bellicose clashes and all kinds of recurrent confrontations.

Given the omnipresence and centrality of armed conflicts, the medieval Iberian states had to gradually adapt their institutions, their economies and even their cultures to successfully face all the challenges posed by the struggles against Islam, against the neighbouring Christian kingdoms and against those internal elements which were engaged in a bellicose dispute over power. Perhaps it is not a historical accident that what is considered the oldest instance of European parliamentarism, which brought together representatives of all social groups, took place in the kingdom of Leon in 1188 with one of its objectives being to obtain the social consensus necessary to finance the war. Nor was it alien to the military context that various monarchs of the Christian kingdoms of the north, in their role as heads of political communities, presented themselves as true warrior kings and warlords who led actions of war, or that societies were willing to use increasingly larger resources, through a new tax system which was more burdensome and intricate, to sustain military action which gradually involved more men, more money, more bureaucratic resources and increasingly sophisticated and expensive technology.

It cannot be denied that between the final decades of the 15th century and the first decades of the 16th century, and intrinsically related to the formation of the 'modern states', a series of rapid transformations took place in the military area which can be considered a 'military revolution'. Its features are perfectly identifiable in the Iberian kingdoms, namely the emergence of permanent armies, the tactical predominance of the infantry, the development of long campaigns, the increase in the size of armies, the introduction of artillery and the adaptation of fortifications to this new weapon, the increasing importance of the navy, and the greater incidence of war on the non-combatant population. However, all this cannot let us forget that many of these changes were rooted in long-term developments that had been taking place in these kingdoms for some time. There, the infantry had never been just

a minor weapon supporting the cavalry, as their role as shooters on the battlefields, first as archers or crossbowmen and later as musketeers, was always important and, of course, was essential in other types of military conflicts, such as siege warfare. Artillery using gunpowder had been present from at least the middle of the 14th century, although its technical development and greater impact was not seen until the War of Granada, whereas the adaptation of fortifications to artillery fire did not have to wait until the 16th century, since remarkable developments had already occurred in the previous century. The size of the armies had grown steadily since the High Middle Ages, and their volume had multiplied at least fivefold during the last three centuries of the medieval period. There had been no permanent army until the beginning of the Modern Age, but the Iberian medieval armies contained professional, permanent, disciplined, and trained bodies from long before that – such as the components of military orders or the king's personal guard. Nor was it necessary to wait until the Italian wars at the beginning of the 16th century for Iberian monarchies to be able to carry out long-lasting ambitious military campaigns, which followed clear strategic guidelines and developed successful solutions to the great logistical problems that accompanied them. The Aragonese expansion along the Mediterranean from the first third of the 13th century, the actions of the Castilians in the struggle for control of the Strait since the end of that century or those of the Portuguese in their expansion into North Africa from the beginning of the 15th century were clear evidence of the early importance of navies. In short, the development of strategies to deplete the economic resources of adversaries shows that the impact of war on non-combatants had been part of the daily life of war since the 8th century.

Geoffrey Parker[1] states that the 'western way of war', upon which 'the triumph of the West' has stood for the last few centuries, is based on five basic pillars: military technology, discipline, the maintenance of a theoretical tradition that has always aimed at the enemy's total defeat as the ultimate military objective, the ability to adapt to changes and new challenges, and the interest and ability to finance this. It is clear that the medieval Iberian kingdoms had undertaken these principles for centuries and that they had done so with such intensity and conviction that, in the Late Middle Ages or the Early Modern Age, they were in a position to carry out the 'export of violence' to Italy and the Mediterranean, to Flanders and continental Europe, to the African coasts, America, Asia and the Pacific islands. Those who undertook this were direct heirs of the many generations of Iberian warriors who preceded them and of the medieval societies in which they germinated.

A Castilian author of the 14th century said that in war there are so many evils that not only the deed, but also the word itself causes fright; and however

much can be said or written about it, it will never be enough to describe all the evil it causes. The reason for this is that war brings poverty, injury and grief, and gives birth to dishonour, death, pain, the denial of God, the depopulation of the world and the waning of law and order. The writer was a nobleman who had spent a large part of his life fighting. Like him, historians cannot help feeling the horror of war, but we also know that we must not stop studying and, as far as possible, explaining a phenomenon that has shaped and continues to shape our world.

Note

1 Parker, G. (ed.) (2000) *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Warfare: The Triumph of the West*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Introduction.

Glossary

'Abid body of slaves, usually blacks (who were also termed 'Sudanese' in our sources), who formed an elite unit whose objective was to serve as a praetorian guard under different rulers. Especially well known are those who served in the Almohad army, who represented the final obstacle before reaching the caliph.

Adarga bivalve shield of North African origin made from ox, onager, or *lamt* (Saharan antelope) leather. It surpassed the Christian shield in flexibility, for it was made up of pieces of leather stuck and sewn together and was not stretched over a wooden frame.

Adelantado the *Partidas* defines *adelantados* as the king's representative (*vicario*) in the monarch's absence. However, in the second half of the 13th century it was only used to designate the deputies in Andalusia (*Adelantado de la Frontera*) and Murcia. Normally, these positions were filled exclusively by the kingdom's most prominent nobles, the *ricos hombres*, due to the military requirements of the post. Besides administrative and judicial duties, the *adelantados* were responsible for defending the frontier, which included actively participating in military campaigns against Granada.

Agramontés from Agramont, a noble family of Basse Navarre; a follower of King Juan II in the Navarrese Civil War.

Alardo a muster.

Alcabala a tax on economic transactions. It was first introduced in Andalusia and Murcia in 1333 to fund the troops left to defend the borders against the Marinids. In 1342, Alfonso XI extended the tax to the whole kingdom in order to finance the upcoming siege against Algeciras. Although it was initially used to support the exceptional situation of the military, the Crown continued to impose it in the following decades until it became a permanent tax in 1393. The *alcabala* began at a rate of 3.33 per cent but, by the second half of the 14th century, it had increased to 5 per cent and 10 per cent.

Alcaide governor of a castle. Castellan.

Al-fakkak *alfaqueque*, redeemer of captives. For a sum of money, they offered their services to the relatives of a prisoner in infidel territory. Such

services involved negotiating delivery and, eventually, paying the ransom.

Alférez main military rank in the Iberian armies of the 10th to 13th centuries. Originally he was the king's flag or standard bearer, but by the 13th century this person's duties had been expanded and he acted as judge in the *hueste* (or host) and as the king's deputy when the latter did not lead the army. This office also existed in the noble militias with the same duties.

Almogávares men exclusively dedicated to war, looting and theft, who lived on the most remote regions of the Christian/Muslim border.

***Anadel* (Captain)** see '*besteiros do conto*'.

Anúduva this was an obligation for men who were not noble but were fit for military service requiring them to assist in tasks relating to building and maintaining the military structures of their land (namely, the fortifications).

Apellido a defensive military operation launched by city governments when the town or surrounding area was attacked. It was led by the local authorities and all the residents were required to participate in it. Organization of the *apellido* was governed under the legal regulations of each city, known as *fueros*.

Aquantiados residents in the kingdom of Portugal, usually farmers, who had their own home and whose fortune was evaluated by royal and council officials. As a result of this assessment ('*aquantiamento*'), they were required to participate in war with certain weapons and, in the case of the richest, with a horse as well. They were subject to inspections – the '*alardos*' (musters) carried out by '*coudéis*' – (cavalry officers who were royally appointed officials) – between one and three times a year, to check on the good condition of their weapons and mounted animals.

Arcabuz arquebus. The most common portable firearm used by the Portuguese.

Arcabuzeiro arquebusier.

'Ard troop-muster, usually taking place before campaigns, by which the number of forces available and their shape and equipment were reviewed.

Aventureiro volunteer for a military campaign.

Balão small rowing boat, very light, made of one single wooden piece.

***Baluarte* (bulwark or bastion)** key element of military architecture from the Early Modern Period. It was a small fortified element in a pentagonal shape, with three salient and two re-entrant angles, located at a prominent angle to the fortress and which housed artillery using gunpowder. Each bulwark was designed together with other neighbouring elements of the same type to ensure crossfire.

***Barbacã* (barbican)** also known as 'barriers', are relatively low walls built within a few metres of the main walls in order to protect and reinforce some strategically more sensitive areas of a fortress, such as towers or doors, and that could also extend and surround the entire fortification.

Beamontés from Beaumont, a noble family of bastard but royal lineage; a follower of Prince Charles in the Navarrese Civil War.

Berço cradle. About 5cm bore, notionally 1-pdr (iron).

Bergantim similar to the galliot, but smaller. It had a straight deck with eight or ten rowers' benches. It could mount a sail.

***Besteiros do conto* (Crossbowmen)** Portuguese militia consisting of archers with a crossbow, generally recruited from artisans used to hunting. They were created by King Dinis (1279–1325) and developed by his successors, with their number being proportional to the demographic features of each locality. In the early 15th century, Portugal was divided into 300 crossbowmen recruitment units, called '*anadelarias*', which were headed by an '*Anadel*' (Captain) appointed by the king. During this period, there were around 5,000 crossbowmen, who were vital in military campaigns and guarding castles. They enjoyed some privileges, which had, however, been decreasing over the years.

Bombarda bombard.

Buruz display of troops, observed by the ruler and the high officials of the central power that took place in Cordova about 20 days prior to leaving on campaign. Days after the display, the war protocol prior to the expedition ended with the tying of flags and the handing out of standards.

Cabalgada a military operation of an offensive nature. Usually, its aim was to plunder or destroy the enemy's property and it was made up of small contingents of knights and foot soldiers, ranging from a few tens to several hundreds of fighters. Their radius of action varied greatly – from ten to several hundred kilometres – and they lasted relatively brief periods, from one day to

a month and a half, although some lasted several months. They are also referred to as *razzia*, *algara*, *algazúa*, *aceifa*, *correría* and *tala*.

Caballería money fief.

Caballería villana **(popular cavalry)** a social and military group characteristic of urban Iberian societies. They were composed of residents of a city who were not nobles but had sufficient economic resources to keep a horse and a knight's weapons. *Caballero villano* status afforded fiscal and political privileges.

Calaluz small light boat which had up to 25 oars and could carry 20 to 25 soldiers.

Camelete small camel. Notionally a 12-pdr, 16 cm bore.

Camelo medium artillery piece firing projectile weighing around 15 kilogrammes.

Capitão captain. Usually the senior company officer.

Caravela caravel. Lateen ship which had two or three masts with square and triangular sails and was c.50 tons.

Caravelão small caravel with three masts and square and triangular sails.

Carriagem baggage carts.

Catur small rowing boat that could also mount a sail. Frequently used on the Malabar.

Cavaleiro upper works of a 'bastion'.

Colobretas primitive individual Portuguese firearms. They appeared in the mid-15th century, mainly in the North Africa campaigns. Many were imported from northern Europe, particularly from Flanders.

Comendador governor of a castle and a seigneurial domain belonging to a military order.

Companhia company. The most common military organizational structure.

Condestable **or** ***Condestável*** this position was created in 1382 imitating the French *connectable* from the time of the Valois. The *Condestable* replaced the

alférez as the commander of the Castilian army and became the most prominent royal officer. The *Condestable* enjoyed wide military and juridical prerogatives, which included logistical and organizational responsibilities, the appointment of the army's officers and military leadership. In Portugal the position of *Condestável* was created in 1382 by English influence.

Contias annual income attributed by the Portuguese kings to their vassals, by granting money, land, income or rights. Depending on the amount stipulated in their '*contia* letter', when the call was made, all beneficiaries were obliged to report to theatres of war, with a certain number of men ('lancers').

Coronel Colonel. The commander of a *terço*.

Cortes parliament, originating in meetings of the royal court that were expanded to include larger numbers of nobles, prelates and municipal *procuradores* (in Aragon beginning in 1164).

Cortina curtain. A straight section of a fortified wall.

Coseletes infantry soldiers equipped with basic armour and a pike.

***Coudel* (Cavalry officer)** see '*aquantiados*'.

Diputaciones del General government institutions set up in Aragon, Valencia and Catalonia between 1363 and 1365, the main functions of which were to manage the state tax system.

Diwan al-jund/al-jaysh register providing proof of the forces subject to military service, usually called up through territorial circumscriptions, *kora*s. It existed, with different nuances, during the entire Andalusi period.

Encomienda the military orders' widespread holdings were divided into smaller units, *encomiendas* or commanderies, which provided economic support to the *freires* who lived there. Every *encomienda* was obligated to contribute an amount to the military order's army that was calculated according to its resources. *Encomiendas* were ruled by a *freire* who was appointed by the Master.

Escudo a unit of Spanish currency. It was worth 10 *reales*.

Espingarda primitive firearm used by the Spanish at the end of the 15th century, until the spread of the Arquebus in the 16th century.

Espingardero a foot soldier armed with an *espingarda*, a flintlock rifle

mounted on a stock similar to that of a crossbow. This kind of troop appeared in the second half of the 15th century and played a relevant role in the War of Granada (1482–1492). By the end of the century, Castilian town militias, especially those of Toledo and Ciudad Real, provided the Crown's armies with around 500 of these soldiers.

Esquadrão main tactical formation usually made up of several companies of pike-men, possibly with more than one *terço*.

Fonsado* or *Fossado an offensive military operation into enemy territory, usually led by the king or his deputy, who selectively recruited nobles and residents of the cities. One could be exempted from such military service through payment of a fee, the *fonsadera* (or *fossadeira*).

Forais municipal charters.

Fuero in Aragon, a document recording municipal or regional laws, customs, and privileges. Also called *usatge* (Catalonia) and *fur* (Valencia).

Fuero General de Navarra law compilation of the kingdom of Navarre. The first codification was made in 1238.

Fusta fust-boat. A long and narrow ship with a small draft. It had a spur and a variable number of rowers' benches (between 10 and 26). It had a mast where a lateen sail could be mounted.

Galeão galleon. With some similarities to the *naus*, it was specifically shaped for naval warfare, with the main weaponry on the second deck. It had four masts, two in the bow with round sails, lateen sails in the reverse and three decks and a draft smaller than the *naus*, which allowed it to sail in shallower waters.

Galeota galliot, small galley. Ship like the galley, but smaller. It had 20 paddles per board and two masts with a Lateen sail.

Ghanima war booty. This was one of the commonest ways to obtain funding to maintain military activities, already specified in primary sources of Islamic Law. Also, the state fed from the fifth of the booty, *khums*, reserved to the ruler.

Ghara/ghazwa expeditions of a quick and sudden nature most of the times, sometimes led by the ruler in person, which constituted the best and most frequent expression of attrition warfare. Their objective was to weaken the

enemy's military, economic, political and social structures, avoiding the high cost implied by a pitched battle. The most common kind were the *sa'ifa*, carried out in spring to summer.

Ghuzat al-mujahidin the '*jihad* combatants', Maghrebi soldiers who came to increase the ranks of the Nasrid army. A member, usually a dissident, from the Marinid royal family arrived who had authority over them and was considered a *shaykh al-ghuzat*.

Hasham mercenaries that were part of the Andalusi armies from the first half of the 9th century. They were highly professionalized troops, available at all times, used as elite corps. Their provenance was extremely varied: Franks, Slavs, slaves converted to Islam, freed slaves, etc. In the Almoravid and Almohad periods, mercenaries from the peninsular Christian kingdoms proliferated, usually due to political problems.

Herreruelo *(caballos-corazas)* heavy cavalry equipped with breast and back plates, helmet and a buff coat. Their main weapons were a pair of pistols and a sword.

Hidalgo Member of the lesser aristocracy, who were free and exempted from paying taxes.

Homiziados convicted criminals to whom was given the opportunity to have their punishments reduced in return for military service.

Honor a tenancy. Position of jurisdictional, military or financial authority resulting from the temporary delegation of royal lordship (or other) in a given location. In Aragon the term used since the 11th century.

Hoste group of armed men. Host.

Hushud troops recruited through mandatory and extraordinary recruitment for a specific campaign, who, once the expedition had ended, returned to their normal activities. In certain periods of Andalusi history, this recruitment could be avoided by paying a certain tax, used in turn to hire mercenaries.

Infante **or** ***Infanta*** son or daughter of a king.

Infanzón a member of the lower nobility.

Iqta' concession, for a certain period or perpetually, of the benefits obtained from a territorial possession. Quite early it became one of the usual payment

methods to the *jund* in exchange for military service, yet it seems that it never became institutionalized in al-Andalus.

Istinfar call-up for expeditions. In the case of summer expeditions, these took place between the months of February and March. They were carried out in one of two ways: firstly, each province's rulers gathered the men appearing in the *diwan* (s. *diwan al-jund/al-jaysh*); secondly, recruitments, *hushud* (s. *hushud*), were accepted.

Jineta a Nasrid sword first used on horseback between the 13th and the 14th centuries. Its main features were the presence of a tripartite hilt and semicircular quillons with animal heads, characterized by curved arms on its external side and vertical ones on the internal side. Slimmer and shorter than ordinary swords, its hilt was heavier, which made it easier to handle.

Jinete light cavalryman. Riders '*a la jineta*' used smaller horses and shorter stirrups than men-at-arms (known as riders '*a la guisa*' in Castile), which increased their manoeuvrability. *Jinetes* wore lighter armour and were equipped with lighter spears than the heavy cavalry. They were similar to Muslim light cavalry, but they also used their spears in close quarters, not only as a missile weapon.

Jugada tribute paid in wine, corn, wheat or linen, in the lands that the kings reserved especially for themselves when they granted some of the municipal charters. It was calculated according to the number of oxen owned.

Jund regular salaried army of a permanent nature, inscribed in a register (see *Diwan al-jund/al-jaysh*) and dependent on the central power for everything related to its management, equipment, financing and maintenance. It constituted the bulk of the Andalusi forces.

***Karr wa farr* (*tornafuye*)** battle tactic based on the Islamic light cavalry speed and skill, which consisted of repeatedly charging and having withdrawals with encircling techniques, by which enemy ranks were thrown into disarray, often characterized by having heavier equipment, and worn down. With the incorporation of mounted archers, armed with composite bows, this tactic was even more effective, since the encircling and withdrawal movements were accompanied by a constant and accurate shower of projectiles.

***Lanças* (Lancers)** designation usually given in Portugal to men who were well equipped with weapons, who accompanied the groups of armed men of the

nobility or military orders. As far as documentation indicates, each 'lancer' in Portugal had to correspond to only a single man-at-arms.

Lanchara small rowing boat, shallow and light, used in Malaysia.

Lanza a military unit. The term was originally used in the organization of the military orders' hosts but it was soon adopted by the Crown. From the second half of the 14th century onwards, Castilian army sizes were estimated by the number of *lanzas* they had. There are no extant sources describing how many effectives a *lanza* comprised. However, it appears that it consisted of one man-at-arms, and an extra horse, which was supported by two or three foot soldiers.

Leño a type of ship used for trading and military transports.

Libramiento the salary that the king's vassals received in exchange for their military service. The Crown started to distribute *libramientos* beginning in the second half of the 13th century, although they were not specifically regulated until Alfonso XI issued the *Ordenamiento de Burgos* of 1338. From then on, the military obligations that the king's vassals had to fulfil were detailed according to the salary they received from the Crown. The salaries and their correspondent military obligations were adjusted for inflation and currency devaluation in the following decades. In the second half of the 14th century the term *acostamiento* replaced the word *libramiento*.

Maestre de Campo the commander of a *tercio*, literally meaning 'master of the field' but not to be confused with the rank of field marshal.

Ma'luj renegades. Originally slaves, hence their name *mamluk*, converts to Islam and freed slaves. These latter forces normally made up the emir's personal guard.

Manga tactical deployment of arquebusiers according to European standards in the second half of the 16th century.

Marinids *Zanata* Berber dynasty. The Maliki sultanate of the Banu Marin replaced the Almohads in the northern part of western Maghreb and established its capital in Fez, a city in which they erected numerous buildings, such as its famous *madrasas*. Since the late 13th to mid-14th century they actively intervened with a political *jihad* agenda in the Iberian Peninsula, gaining control of towns like Algeciras and Gibraltar.

Mayordomo Steward, responsible for the management of the royal household

or other.

Merino Sheriff or High Sheriff.

Mesnada synonym for an army or *hueste,* generally associated with the nobility. In sources from Castile-Leon, the personal guard that surrounded the monarch to guarantee his safety was known as the *Mesnada del rey*. They formed a permanent professional contingent that also performed important military duties in the event of war.

Mosquete musket. Heavy firearm.

Nafṭ nafta, a fraction of petroleum also known as benzine. Along with gunpowder, it was used in assault engines that hurled burning stone and burning iron missiles. The first to use this were the Marinids in the 1274 siege of Sijilmassa.

Nau a large ship. In the early 16th century it had approximately 100 barrels and very high forecastles sloping to the reverse. Over time, it increased in size, as well as in the number of decks, generally having three masts.

Ordenança ordinance. This refers to the troops raised within the kingdom's borders, as well as the orderly deployment of soldiers on the battlefield.

Parias a tribute paid by the Islamic states of al-Andalus to the Iberian Christian kingdoms in exchange for ceasing or not beginning an attack. Payment of *parias* could entail protection from third parties and a certain degree of political or vassal-like submission to Christian rule.

Picas secas light pikemen whose only defensive armour was a helmet.

Pique pike. A long lance measuring 4–5 metres. One of the three main weapons in the equipment of soldiers in a mid-16th-century *tercio*.

Presidios garrisons of professional infantry soldiers, who defended a fortification.

Préstamos lands given (generally on a precarious basis) as a reward for services rendered, since the monetary system was not very common or abundant. This practice applied to the whole range of the social ladder, with honours being the name given to the concession of lands by the king to the masters who administered a very vast territory pertaining to the crown.

Qa'id officer in charge of the army's command, or of part of it, usually only

below the sovereign himself or the general representing him. He could lead both infantry and horsemen, and take charge of the military command of a town or territory.

Qutb command of the *ghuzat al-mujahidin* under the *shaykh al-ghuzat*. Literally meaning 'axis' or 'pole', it is a term of Sufi origin. Its use to denominate a link in the Marinid/Nasrid military chain of command is solid proof of the degree of institutionalization acquired by Sufism in the Islamic West.

Real Spanish coin worth 34 *maravedíes*.

Regimento instructions given to senior commanders.

Remensa in Catalonia, serfdom status.

Retenencia the income of the governor of a castle, which included his salary and the payment of the regular needs of the building and his garrison.

Ribat etymologically, this means 'knot, bond', and consisted of arriving at the fortresses at the frontier to carry out a military activity which could be active, but generally was more pious, passive and, in certain cases, defensive rather than offensive or aggressive. The believer, if necessary, offered his cooperation for the defence, while he worked on his spirituality through ascetic practices such as sessions reading the Qur'an day and night, meditation, fastings, or austerity in dressing.

Ricohombre member of the higher nobility, lord or baron.

Rodela shield, usually round.

Sargento Sergeant.

Senescal standard-bearer, commander of the king's military household or of a military order. The position became honorific in the 13th century.

Servicio de hueste the authority of the jurisdictional lord to dispose of the military force of the communities under its control. This obligation could be redeemed through the payment of a fee.

Soldadas system of payment of the noble combatants that could take the form of a fixed income coming from a given property, of a sum paid in cash, or a mixture of both. The nobles who were paid with *soldadas* had as their counterpart the duty to go to war with their retinues.

Tercio a unit comprising several companies, commanded by a *maestre de campo*.

Terço the Portuguese word for *tercio*, introduced in Portugal around 1572, during the preparations for the Moroccan expedition of 1578.

***Thagr* (pl. *thughur*)** frontier provinces of al-Andalus that remained organized in the Umayyad period in three possible 'marchlands': the upper frontier region, the capital of which was Zaragoza; the middle frontier region, the capital of which was first Toledo and later Medinaceli; and the lower, the capital of which was Mérida and later Badajoz. In addition, each frontier region had to contribute troops to the Cordovan expedition when it came to its territories and was required to do so.

***Torre de menagem* (keep)** it is, as a rule, the tallest and the most important tower of the castle. It is also the best protected and therefore, since its emergence, in the middle of the 12th century, the last defensive stronghold, in which it was possible to resist even after the rest of the castle was taken by the enemy.

Trabuco *trebuchet*, a type of neuroballistic artillery.

Tranqueira a kind of palisade. Temporary wooden works used to protect defensive positions, as well as to reinforce permanent fortifications during sieges.

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